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ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF THE MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE PLAN AND BLOCK FUNDING ON THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

BY

(C) ELIZABETH ANN DOWNEY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

SPECIAL EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1986

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submitted by ELIZABETH ANN DOWNEY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

In Special Education

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(Supervisor)

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Date: 7 October 1986

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother,

Marjorie Josephine Downey,

Whose guidance, support, and encouragement led me in the right direction, gave me the courage and strength to take a chance, and inspired my desire to grow and learn and become an individual, striving to develop to my fullest potential.

With love,

Elizabeth

ABSTRACT

The nature of the service delivery system utilized for the delivery of special education programs and services to students is directly related to the funding scheme through which finances are distributed by the governing body. The study which is described here examined the perceived impact of the implementation of a new management and finance plan and a block fund for special education. Alberta Education adopted and implemented the Management and Finance Plan (MFP) and a block fund for special education in January of 1984. System and school administrators were interviewed and surveyed as to how they perceived the block fund and MFP affecting services to special education students, the severely and multiply handicapped in particular.

The findings suggest that, although administrators did not expect significant changes in the first or second year of implementation, they were concerned about the future effects on special services and programs for special needs students, especially the severely and multiply handicapped. Many expressed a fear that detrimental effects would become increasingly evident with time.

Administrators generally expressed dissatisfaction with the inclusion of funds for high-cost students in the block fund. They agreed that the block fund was a positive initiative and expressed appreciation for the flexibility and autonomy it offers. However, many

would have liked to see a separate fund maintained for the severely and multiply handicapped - earmarked funds which would go with the student as he or she moves from one district to another.

It was evident that, directly resulting from MFP and block funding, as perceived by administrators, there were increases in integration and a decreased need to categorize students for placement purposes. Although this was a direction in keeping with the current trend toward mainstreaming and normalization, some administrators did not perceive these changes as positive.

Although generally administrators perceived MFP and block funding as a positive educational initiative, they expressed a number of concerns and questions which require further examination if this new approach is to be maximally effective.

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Each of the forty-four administrators involved in the study gave selflessly of their time when I visited their school systems for

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Special education has become a subject of considerable controversy over the past two decades. In the United States, in 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL94-192) was adopted and every handicapped child was guaranteed the right to a free, appropriate public education. In Canada, except for the Declaration of Human Rights, there is no federal law to guarantee the rights of exceptional children to education (Goguen, 1980). Six of the ten provinces in Canada have legislation described as "mandatory" with respect to the education of exceptional children: Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Newfoundland, Quebec, and Ontario. Mandatory legislation, however, does not guarantee the "proper" education of every handicapped child (Goguen, 1980). The remaining provinces continue to administer "permissive" legislation with respect to special education.

In Alberta, "permissive" legislation governs education. The present School Act requires that each school district in the province provide an education to all children ages 6 to 16 who reside within their district, or arrange for and finance the education of a child outside the district. Gall (1985) reports that in Alberta, under permissive legislation, discretionary powers are retained by school authorities to exclude special needs children from school. The

Carriere vs Lamont School District Case of 1978 in Alberta resulted in a judicial challenge to a district regarding its power of exclusion. However, Gall reports that the courts were unwilling or unable to enforce the monitoring and compliance facets which would have given the ruling some impact. Gall argues that due process safeguards are required by which the government can monitor local compliance and through which parents can seek redress under conditions and grievances.

The Carriere case court ruling prompted the district in question to provide an educational program for the parents' handicapped daughter within the home district, where previously no program existed which would be considered suitable for that child. With this case as a precedent, many parents of handicapped children in Alberta have become aware of their rights and are demanding that programs which can cater to the unique special needs of their children be developed and made available at the local level. Development of such programs has taken major strides over the past ten to twenty years. School systems are providing an increased number and a wider range of programs, and Alberta Education has, since the early 1970's, made education of handicapped children one of its priorities (Goguen, 1980).

Alberta Education established the Special Education Service Branch in recognition of individual differences and to provide leadership in making available to children with exceptional educational needs opportunities that might otherwise be closed to them. The Branch views the purpose of special education as providing opportunities for children with exceptional educational needs, both the educationally disabled and the gifted/talented, in order to make it possible for

those children to receive an education commensurate with their potential (Alberta Education Special Education Manual, 1985).

Providing adequate educational programs and services to handicapped children is a costly endeavor. Special education programs are normally known to be more expensive than regular education programs. Assessment, special services such as speech therapy or physiotherapy, smaller class sizes, and individual program planning engender expenses which are additional to the cost of regular educational programs. These expenses and others unique to special education contribute to the high cost of developing and maintaining a variety of special programs within individual school systems.

Alberta Education is committed to providing funding to school districts for special education purposes. The formula utilized for distributing special education funds, however, has undergone considerable change in the past ten years. Recently, the Department of Education has developed and implemented "block funding" for special education as part of its new Management and Finance Plan (MFP). The study which will be described in this paper was designed to examine the Management and Finance Plan and Block Funding as they relate to special education. The major objectives were to determine how superintendents, special education administrators and principals perceive:

a) The goals, structure and workability of MFP with respect to its effects on future directions for special education service delivery; and

b) The goals, structure and workability of block funding with respect to the effects on future directions for special education

service delivery, with a specific emphasis on services provided to students who were formerly funded by a program unit grant (PUG), a grant which was made available to school systems for students who were severely and/or multiply handicapped.

This chapter will review briefly the history of special education in Alberta; outline the past mechanisms utilized for funding distribution, as well as the current block funding formula; describe the Management and Finance Plan as it relates to special education; and further highlight aspects of the study to be presented and discussed in later chapters.

Before one can comprehend adequately the history and development of special education in Alberta, an understanding of the general administrative structure of education in the province is necessary. Education in Alberta is governed provincially and, under government control, by locally elected school boards. The province's educational system is comprised of two publicly supported systems, the public and separate school systems, and a number of private schools. Both public systems receive the same level of government funding, approximately 75 percent of the total educational expense incurred by that system. Private schools receive a lower level of support.

In addition to the provision of funding for education, the provincial government acts in an advisory capacity to school boards and their education officers. The five regional offices of education, through their specialty area consultants, play the major part in this advisory role.

Special education facilities are operated under the same basic

organizational structure as regular education. The current organization of special education in the province, however, has evolved through the efforts of parents, teachers and administrators who advocate equitable educational opportunities for all children. A brief history of the development and evolution of the province's special education program follows.

The History of Special Education in Alberta

The first initiative to provide a special program for handicapped children seems to have taken place in 1919, in Calgary (Church, 1980). A class of some 20 abnormal students was established and an "expert" teacher was appointed to teach them. A policy on the education of "subnormal pupils" was apparently developed in 1923. In that same year the Assistant Deputy Minister of Education stated in his report that "it has been the object of the Department to encourage the School Boards of the cities and larger centers to provide auxiliary classes for children of sufficiently serious mental defect as to render it impossible for them to keep pace with their normal fellows. Assistance is given in the form of a special grant equal to one-half the salary of teachers of such classes" (Eighteenth Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta, 1923, p.19). By 1950, there were 18 special education classes in the province with a total enrollment of 256 pupils. These classes included 14 classes for subnormals (204 pupils), 2 sight-saving classes (25 pupils), and 2 hard-of-hearing classes (27 pupils) (Church, 1980).

In 1951, Alberta Education extended grants for special education to include funding programs designed to serve physically handicapped children. Over the next ten years the first program for children with cerebral palsy was developed, the School for the Deaf was established, and plans for the Glenrose School Hospital for physically handicapped were initiated. During this period the Alberta government also began funding private schools for the handicapped.

The period from 1960 to 1970 was one of rapid growth for special education in the province. In 1969 the Calgary Board of Education took over the education of trainable mentally retarded children, an initiative which was to be followed by other school boards in the province. It was also in 1969 that the special education grant was removed from the special class to a special education teaching position. Special classes for the learning disabled first began to appear in 1965 (Church, 1980).

In the early seventies two Learning Assistance Centers were established in the province, one in Grande Prairie and one in Red Deer. These centers operated through their respective regional offices. An external evaluation of both centers was conducted about one year after their establishment and the Red Deer Center was dissolved. The Learning Assistance Center in Grande Prairie is still in operation.

As one would expect, the development of special education programs in Alberta has been very closely tied to funding schemes adopted and implemented by Alberta Education. Therefore, further discussion on the history of special education and the developments which have led to the present system, necessitates a focus on the financial aspects.

Finance and Special Education in Alberta

Annual reports from the Department of Education indicate that growth in the number of special education students and teachers increased rapidly from 1950 to 1980 (Church, 1980). A total of 256 students were identified for special education programs in 1950; in 1979 there were 23,701. This increase, which is almost one-hundred fold, is substantially greater than the increase in the school population generally (167,790 in 1950, to 425,828 in 1979). Such a rapid increase in numbers of special education students required the government to look at more flexible means of funding special education. As mentioned previously, a shift from classroom-based grants to teacher-based grants was initiated in 1969.

The special education teaching position (SETP) grant was paid for itinerant and resource teachers as well as for teachers of special education classes. The purpose of the SETP grant was to support the employment by school districts of teachers in special education programs serving pupils with educationally significant handicaps. In 1975 this grant was differentiated according to the kind of handicap. Type A grants were allocated when the handicaps were of a more serious nature and required higher educational costs. Type B grants were allocated when the students were mildly to moderately handicapped and therefore their education less costly. Payment was made for each position established and approved according to the type of exceptional child served.

The Type A Grants initially consisted of four levels of support.

For the trainable mentally retarded a teaching position grant of $15,330 was allocated; for the severely learning disabled, hearing handicapped or low vision student $16,370 was provided; $18,800 was provided for braille and oral deaf education programs; and $23,530 was available for a total communication deaf education program (Church, 1980).

The Learning Disabilities Fund was introduced in 1973. This fund was paid to school boards on a per pupil basis on behalf of elementary students and was to provide for assessment, program planning, and consultation. Initially, Alberta Education allotted a total of one million dollars to this fund; school boards received ten dollars for each elementary school student enrolled (Church, p. 1980). The purpose of the fund was to encourage school boards to employ or contract qualified persons to provide assessment, diagnosis and program development in the area of learning disabilities. Persons employed or contracted were required by Alberta Education to be on the Learning Disabilities Registry. This registry was established as a means of ensuring that such persons were qualified to give service under its regulations.

The program unit grant (PUG) was designed to supplement programs in basic education for severely handicapped pupils, to the extent that they require a variety of services beyond those normally provided in either regular or special education classes (Alberta Education, 1983b). The PUG became effective in 1979 and was provided by the government to the extent of $32,800 per unit (Church, (1980). Although a unit was considered to be six students, allowance was also made for units of

more or less than six. These allowances in the 1983-84 school year were as follows (Alberta Education, 1984a):

Number of children in program unit	Rate per program unit ($)
1	21,800
2	26,160
3	30,520
4	34,880
5	39,230
6	43,600
7 or more	43,600 plus 7,260 for each child enrolled in excess of six children

In 1980, the PUG was reported to have served over 200 pupils (Church, 1980). By the 1983-84 school year, Alberta Education was funding 594 units or a total of 1,046 pupils (Alberta Education, 1984c).

The PUG was provided to school districts upon submission of documentation which showed that the pupil(s) met the criteria for the grant. The criteria for a PUG were as follows (Alberta Education, 1983b):

A. Severely Handicapped in at least one of the following areas:

1. A mental handicap more severe than that associated with the trainable mentally handicapped (I.Q. estimated at less than 30).

2. Neurological impairment sufficiently severe to result in critical loss of motor functioning such as loss of speech, lack of control of hand or eye movement, paralysis.

3. Behavioral disorders manifested by extreme hyperactivity, impulsiveness, bizarre, grotesque, or dangerously aggressive behavior.

B. Severely handicapped as a result of a sensory impairment in combination with one or more handicaps.

C. Severely physically handicapped so that attendance at the educational program is possible only with extensive assistance beyond that which is normally available in regular or special education programs.

D. Legally blind - visual acuity of 20/200 (6/60) or less in the better eye with correction, or a field of vision limited to an angle of 10 degrees or less in one eye or 20 degrees or less in both eyes.

E. Severe deafness - an average loss of 70 decibels or more unaided over the speech range.

Although not considered a special education grant by Alberta Education, mention of the Educational Opportunities Fund (EOF), established in 1973, is warranted here. This fund consists of two components, a compensatory component and an elementary component. The compensatory component was designed to assist local school authorities to cope with the needs of students who are disadvantaged by social and economic conditions (Alberta Education, 1984b). The EOF compensatory grant, together with other forms of finance for special education, have resulted in a situation where the amount of service being provided for exceptional children in remote areas of the province exceeds that of more favorable locations (Barren, 1979). The grant could be applied for by school districts which met the economic and social criteria determined by Alberta Education prior to each funding cycle.

The elementary component of the EOF was designed to encourage local school authorities to enhance the regular education program at

the elementary level (Alberta Education, 1984b). This fund was provided on a per-pupil basis up to a maximum amount approved by the Minister of Education. All districts were eligible to apply for the grant. This fund was used extensively by school districts to set up and operate resource room programs as well as to support other remedial instruction projects.

In addition to the special education grants mentioned above, and the EOF, Alberta Education provided funding for tuition of pupils who attend category two private schools for the handicapped. These pupils are generally trainable mentally handicapped, severely learning disabled, behaviorally disabled, or dependent or multiple handicapped. Funding of private schools of this nature has been maintained by Alberta Education.

The funding formula described here which was utilized by Alberta Education prior to the introduction of the Management and Finance Plan (MFP) was based largely on the identification and classification of students. Such a system was not administered without considerable difficulty. Some of the problems identified can be summarized as follows (Alberta Education, 1984a):

1. There was confusion in identifying categories of handicaps.

2. The different application forms and claim forms for each grant created confusion and time consuming processing.

3. Some districts had the idea that they were entitled to a certain number of special teaching positions.

4. All school boards did not have the same attitude towards special education, therefore differences arose to the extent that one

board may have offered no special education programs and another offered special programs to 10 percent of its enrollment. This discrepancy led to some boards trying to "catch up".

5. The definition of "full time equivalent" as applied to pupil program and teacher caused considerable consternation.

6. The funding of category two private schools was occasionally viewed as somewhat disproportionate as the grants were paid to private schools on a per-pupil basis with no regulation to govern the number of pupils in a class; grants were paid to public schools on the basis of a unit or a teaching position.

7. Monitoring and evaluation of programs was not conducted on a regular basis.

The funding scheme prior to MFP was established during a period of time in which segregation was acceptable and even encouraged. The past ten to twenty years have seen an increasing emphasis on "integration", "normalization," and "mainstreaming," terms which have been used widely by educators and special educators. In pursuit of integration and normalization of the handicapped population in Alberta schools, the funding scheme presented a problem as dollars were primarily tied to teachers. The scheme lacked the flexibility necessary to support a program for normalization. Further inhibiting adoption of the above principles was the view that organization of instruction is conducted by a generalist who is to be in sole charge of a group of children who are supposed to exhibit a degree of homogeneity in some characteristic (Goguen, 1980). Although funding cannot change attitudes or organization, it can encourage good practice (Goguen, 1980).

The Management and Finance Plan and Block Funding

Block funding for special education is part of the Management and Finance Plan initiated by Alberta Education in January, 1984. The purposes of MFP were to improve the quality of education provided to students and to respond to current and anticipated changes in society (Alberta Education, 1984e).

A number of significant events have affected the lives of Albertans and can be linked to some extent to the establishment of MFP: slower rate of economic growth and population increase; emphasis in education on the evaluation of students, programs, schools, school systems, and teachers; and recommendations of various task force reports related to special needs of children (Alberta Education, 1984f). A greater emphasis on a partnership relationship between Alberta Education and school districts in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of educational programs was also a major force in the development of the Management and Finance Plan in general, and block funding in particular. In accordance with these events, recommendations, and trends, Alberta Education established MFP which, it was hoped, would achieve the following major objectives (Alberta Education, 1984e):

1. Improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, parents, teachers, school districts, and other educational agencies.

2. Increased responsiveness by the total educational system to the

changing needs of students and parents.

3. Within policy directions established by the province, increased local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility and discretion by school districts over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.

4. Increased accountability of both Alberta Education and school districts to the electorate.

5. Increased efficiency and effectiveness in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education with the focus on providing benefits directly to students.

6. Enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.

Block funding for special education is an integral component of MFP. This relatively simple funding mechanism is a per student grant provided to school districts based on the total number of resident students who are the responsibility of that district. The resulting amount is made available for use in providing special education programs and services to students having special education needs, whether the students are educationally disabled or gifted/talented.

The "special needs block grant" incorporated the special education teaching position grant, the learning disability fund, the program unit grant, and the junior high EOF. The change to this block grant, it was believed, would have a number of positive features (Alberta Education, 1983c). It would explicitly increase the level of local autonomy in the provision of special services, while also recognizing the responsibility of each district to serve the specific needs in its area; establish a stronger leadership function for Alberta Education in

the development of appropriate policies related to the provision of special services for all exceptional students; enhance the role of Alberta Education in the development and evaluation of special programs; reduce the need for duplicate administrative infrastructure at the school district and departmental level related to the completion, processing, approval and individual payment of claims for special services provided; replace program and financial regulations with provincial and local policies and program guidelines; and maintain the impetus to provide special services without dictating the exact nature of the services to be provided (Alberta Education, 1983c).

The implementation of MFP and the special needs block grant initially required minor adjustments to a strictly per-pupil grant. Alberta Education wanted to ensure districts with relatively high levels of service to special education students that they would not receive less special education funding in 1984 than they received in 1983. Alberta Education "grandfathered" these districts for both resident and non-resident pupils. School districts were also allowed to collect tuition fees from the resident district of any non-resident pupils attending its programs.

Some districts received "windfall" money when funded on a resident pupil basis; a district may actually have received more funds in 1984 than in 1983, and in some cases considerably more. It was hoped that payment of funds in excess of those provided in 1983 would act as an incentive for the system to provide further programs and services where required.

The study which will be presented was designed to focus on the

impact of MFP and block funding on special education services in grandfathered versus windfalled districts. Because of the obvious differences in these two district-types, data from the two were differentiated and analyzed accordingly.

The block fund also included special provision for gifted education. From two to five percent of the total special education fund allotted to a particular school district in 1983 was added to the amount of funds it received in that year. In 1984 the district was to receive the greater of the block grant (135 dollars per resident pupil) and the previous year's fund plus this percentage allocation for the gifted.

Private schools do not receive the block grant for special education. Special education funding is made available to public and separate school systems for all resident students, whether or not the residents choose to attend private schools. Private schools are allowed to access 75 percent of the school foundation program fund (SFPF), which is the basic education grant provided to all school systems.

It is important to note that in the establishment of the formula to be used for the block grant, considerable controversy prevailed as to whether the PUG should become part of the block. The PUG focuses on specific children with severe handicaps. Some stakeholders felt that including this grant in the block fund was contrary to the Minister's proposed "child oriented" focus. Furthermore, the cost of educating the severely handicapped far exceeds the costs for children with milder handicaps. Concern was expressed that funding provided to very small

school boards would not allow these districts to serve severely handicapped pupils, or to purchase specialized equipment. There was concern that some school districts might set the education of handicapped pupils as a low priority item and subsequently not meet the needs of these pupils, in particular, the severely handicapped. Concerns such as these were expressed by some parents, some educators in the field, and various other stakeholder groups. For these reasons, the study was also designed to focus on the impact of MFP and block funding as it relates to services provided to this group of students in particular.

In response to the above mentioned concerns as well as others expressed by involved parties, Alberta Education held that it was the local district's mandate and responsibility to provide programs for all its pupils with special needs. The full implementation of MFP, therefore, required that program delivery to all pupils be a local responsibilty and not dependent upon the accessing of any particular grant from Alberta Education. In order to ensure that small districts were not unduly penalized, those with a resident student count of less than 500 were to be given priority consideration for extra support under the Special Education Contingency Fund.

In summary, developments in Alberta's educational system over the last decade have initiated program changes in special education. With new programs and services came the need for additional financing of special education from the government. New grants were developed as the need arose. The result was a plethora of individual grants, each with its own description, criteria, and in some cases, a monitoring

system. In 1984 Alberta Education initiated a new finance and management program. One facet of this new program was to implement a block fund which would replace the numerous individual grants which had been developed to finance special education programs. The implementation of the block grant created considerable controversy. The study presented in this document was designed and conducted to examine the perceived impact of the new management and finance plan.

CHAPTER TWO

FINANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The 1980's have seen a shift in focus for special education from a question of whether society should serve the handicapped, to whether the current system of fiscal support and governance of special education is the most efficient and effective way to support programs and services for exceptional students (Crowner, 1985). Thomas, in 1973, identified two major dilemmas which exist in relation to funding education for the handicapped, that of adequacy and that of equity. The major questions which require resolution would be - are the level and amount of funding adequate to provide an appropriate education to all students, and is the funding distributed equitably to systems, schools, and especially programs? These two dilemmas still prevail today, however less in theory than in practice. Although the adoption of PL94-142 in the United States has dealt with the issues of adequacy and equity in theory, in Canada legislation requiring adequacy and equity remains incomplete. However, the expectations of the government, the public and especially parents, is such that school systems are attempting to offer adequate, suitable programs to all their handicapped students.

The specific funding formula which a governing body implements for distribution of special education funds is often directly related to

the service delivery system or organizational structure utilized by the school systems within its district. This chapter will be subdivided into three areas. A discussion of service delivery systems in special education will be presented, followed by a discussion of finance and funding-formulae as they relate to the various systems. In addition, systems and funding structures utilized in Canada will be reviewed.

Special Education Service Delivery

"A service delivery system provides the structure through which identification, referral, assessment, placement and instructional services will be delivered" (Lathen, 1983, p. 15). For educators, a special education service delivery system is a structure through which educational services are delivered to exceptional children. Various approaches to delivering services are discussed in the literature. The various types of models for delivery are described by Maher (1982). He suggests that there are four most common approaches to describing organizational models:

1. The Organizational Approach. Using this approach the governing body declares philosophies, laws and regulations which affect the development of organizational models. A flow chart may be developed to show lines of authority and functions performed.

2. The Categorical or Non-Categorical Models Approach. Using this approach the governing body outlines the types of programs to be provided to individuals who have been classified according to some category or who are being served cross-categorically.

3. The Spectrum of Services Approach. This approach illustrates the range of services that are being provided or that will be provided in the future.

4. The Local School District or Building Approach. This approach defines a plan that applies only to the local district or to one or more school sites in the district.

The controversy related to utilization of a categorical versus a non-categorical approach to service delivery is perhaps the underlying issue in the development and implementation of services to exceptional children. The current trend in Alberta is to de-emphasize special education categories. Many of the special education funding schemes in use across Canada and the United States still base the distribution of grants upon categorization. A review of the literature reveals a number of strengths and limitations associated with categorically-based funding and service delivery. The effects of labeling, categorizing, and tracking students are probably the most frequently discussed limitations. Labeling has several noted side effects, including rigidity in assignments and scheduling when used for placement purposes (Maher, 1982). The use of categories implies that there is a firm boundary between those who are included in a category and those who are not; it also implies that there are differences between the handicapped and the non-handicapped and among different categorical groups (Maher, 1982).

Some educators argue in favor of categorically-based organizations. They argue that removing a label often leads to another label that may also become negative over time. Without some way to

identify a student's problem there may be difficulty placing that child in a class or group appropriate for him or her. Very few parents or special educators want to give up categorical funding - it is the greatest single protection of educational programs for the handicapped (Maher, 1982).

Lathen (1983), Maher (1980), Gotts (1976), and others believe that the needs of handicapped students can only be met when processes are established which effectively identify educationally handicapped and potentially handicapped; assess their psychoeducational needs accurately; design effective individualized program plans; design appropriate placement alternatives for implementation of instruction; and evaluate the process and its outcomes periodically. Lathen (1983) asserts that "actions of the special education service delivery system should de-emphasize search for student disabilities. It should emphasize discovery of conditions and circumstances under which student success is achieved. It should avoid justifying school failure in the name of a handicapping condition and seek to justify anticipating school success as a product of precision planning ... planning based on knowledge of a student's past performance" (p. 19). This position supports the argument for non-categorical service delivery. The focus of such an approach would be the programs and the process of instruction rather than students' handicaps. Federal legislation in the United States prescribed the delivery of educational programs to all handicapped children. Public-law 94-142, section 612(5)(b) requires placements that will, to the greatest extent appropriate, assure the handicapped of an education comparable to that of their non-

handicapped peers (Morra, 1978). The least restrictive environment provision, Howe (1981) claims, should ideally be administered according to the following guidelines:

1. A school system should have at least four levels of programming options for handicapped children which might include an itinerant/consulting teacher, a resource program with integration, a self-contained class with integration, and a self-contained class.

2. Children should move up or down the continuum one level at a time unless there are compelling reasons to jump more than one level.

3. Physical facilities for the handicapped should be equivalent to those provided for regular pupils in the district.

4. Evidence collected over time should show that increasing percentages of children in each level of programming are being served in least restrictive environments.

5. The term mainstreaming should be dropped because of confusion about its meaning and terms such as "least restricted" and "most productive environment" should be substituted (p. 19-20).

It is evident that in order for delivery systems to satisfy the demands of federal law and to provide services by which parents will be assured their children are being provided appropriate educational opportunities, coordination of effort is required among special and regular educators, parents, and students. Reynolds (1979) argues that all educators should have a rudimentary knowledge of all types of handicapping conditions. Regular educators should know the functions of special educators and be prepared to establish team arrangements for the instruction of handicapped students. They should be taught to

refer special needs children and to locate and use additional help. Teachers need to recognize that making a referral does not transfer sole responsibility for the problem to the specialist. In fact, Howe (1981) believes that all teachers should be able to carry out assessments, identify different learning styles, vary instruction for individual students and keep a record of learning outcomes. Although educational leaders may not agree that such widespread expertise is necessary for all teachers, they would no doubt consider it desirable.

Burrello and Sage (1979) have identified two major challenges for leaders in special education:

> (1) to define the parameters of the handicapped population and the types of programs and services available to them, and
>
> (2) to develop the capacity of the larger social system of education to provide equivalent and appropriate educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all handicapped children (p. 5).

Burrello and Sage (1979) would likely agree with the need for cooperation amongst educators in the special education delivery process. They view special education as a social system, a distinct subsystem within the larger social system of public school education. They claim that a major dilemma confronting special educators will be to redefine themselves as something other than specialists distinct from their regular education colleagues in the management and instruction of the handicapped. Special educators must develop a common purpose and need for group membership with general and special educators as well as interagency personnel.

The cooperative effort needs to begin at the earliest stage of

service delivery, namely, identification. Assessment findings and student needs must be interfaced with regular education and special education resources to determine the most appropriate placement for instruction (Lathen, 1983). Before placing a child in a special program there is a need to determine what services would be available for the student in special education which cannot as effectively be provided in regular education. Definitions which are often difficult to rationalize should not be used in isolation for placement purposes. Rubin and Bolov (1971) conducted a study with 967 children in kindergarten to grade three. They found that of 41 percent of the children identified as "educationally handicapped," special education placement had been initiated for almost 25 percent. Lathen questions, on the basis of these results, the ability of the regular education system to administer to normal deviances in the school age population. As an example, he cites from a study conducted by Kenny, Clemens, Hudson et al. (1971) in which it was found that of the students referred for treatment for hyperactivity, 58 percent did not require such treatment.

Service delivery for special education is a process which is subject to many influences. Paul (1981) states that to understand the place of handicapped children in the public school system is to understand much about the values of the society relative to the handicapped. This statement encompasses a number of issues which have significant influence on delivery systems. Attitudes of parents and the public at large, as well as attitudes of educational administrators which affect the adoption of delivery systems, have significant bearing

on the directions special educators pursue. The size of the school system and its location will also affect the nature of the delivery system adopted. A large urban system, populated with students possessing varying degrees of handicap severity and complexity, will have the numbers of students required to offer special programs for students having low-incidence handicapping conditions. However, small, sparsely populated rural districts will have to examine other alternatives for providing service to students displaying low-incidence handicaps. How children are defined as handicapped and whether they are placed on the basis of a definition or according to their unique, special learning needs is another issue centering around the categorical versus non-categorical systems controversy. There is a major movement within the human service delivery system toward deinstitutionalization (Paul, 1981). The "least restrictive environment" and integration to the maximum extent appropriate are factors which govern, to a large extent, the nature of service provided to special education students. Finally, "the public education system is inextricably welded to its socio-economic and political context at any point in time" (Paul, 1981, p. 300). The economic realities faced by a public system, the extent and nature of government support reviewed for educational programs, the financial situation of the system itself, as well as the economic status of the region being served are all forces which will determine the extent of funding channelled towards programs and services for exceptional children.

Paul (1981) identifies five general aspects of the problems involving the issues related to the interaction between the nature of

handicapping conditions and the nature of educational services for children:

1) The way the problem is understood.

"The phenomenology of deviance, that is, the way deviance is understood and explained is one of the most complex issues affecting service models" (Paul, p. 305). Paul explains that some models focus on the deficit that exists or the problem within the child. These systems would tend to segregate or set apart the problem child in order to implement interventions such as tutoring, behavior modification, individual psychotherapy, etc. Ecological thrusts, on the other hand, would focus on the social context of deviance. Interventions based on such a perspective would focus on the interactive nature of the deviance.

2) The problems of children are interdisciplinary in nature.

The most appropriate interventions, Paul claims, should reflect the collaborative understanding and planning of several basic disciplines. However, interdisciplinary evaluation, diagnosis, planning and treatment are difficult to accomplish.

3) It is the nature of handicapping conditions that more than one human service delivery system is likely to be involved with the child and his family.

4) Children who are handicapped make up a heterogeneous group of children. Significant differences exist within as well as between categories.

5) At the national and state levels especially, the political significance of the labels of handicaps is manifested in the

competition between special interest groups for public funds.

The special education service delivery system should identify areas of responsibility, objectives to be achieved, and actions to be taken to achieve these objectives. The various areas of responsibility need to be clearly delineated to the appropriate personnel for coordination, and all involved staff should be fully acquainted with the administrative structure. Lathan (1984) states that a structure which interfaces actions of special educators with those of regular educators is needed to facilitate objective planning and concerted implementation of special education services.

The service delivery system, Lathan (1984) claims, should prescribe actions that answer questions in problem areas of service delivery, such as:

1) What is an exceptional education need?

2) How is a student suspected of having an exceptional need brought to the attention of the school authorities?

3) What actions should take place prior to a special education referral?

4) How are special education forms acquired, by whom are they completed and to whom are they directed?

5) Who investigates suspected exceptional educational needs; what is the responsibility of each involved discipline?

6) What primary areas of student development and functioning are to be developed for each child that is referred for special services?

7) How are multi-disciplinary team findings achieved, reported and translated into guidelines for instruction; by whom?

8) How are guidelines for instruction translated into individualized programs of instruction?

9) To whom are the findings of the assessment team reported; by whom?

10) Special education placement decisions are made on the basis of what minimal criteria; by whom is the placement decision made? (p. 43-44)

The special education service delivery system should communicate criteria that will be used when a special education referral is contemplated. "Faulty perception and interpretation of behavior as deviant accounts for a large number of referrals to special education. Multi-disciplinary team processing of these referrals is expensive. Such referrals create bottle-necking in the system and produce waiting lists for special education" (Lathan, 1983, p. 25). Lathan asserts that the system should designate pre-referral activities and criteria for justification of a suspicion that the student has an exceptional educational need as mechanisms for avoiding such bottle-necking and waiting lists.

The special education service delivery system should develop and implement services and programs which will best provide for an appropriate end for its exceptional students. Until about fifteen years ago the predominant program model was the self-contained special class. However, criticism of this model and incentives such as integration and the least restrictive environment led to adoption of alternate models. For example, in the late 1960's, Dunn (1968) questioned the educational values of special classes. About the same time, parents began recognizing and speaking out about the negative features of labeling and special class placement (Paul, 1981). Deno's Cascade System is one which emphasizes moving students toward the least

restrictive environment, and toward specialized staff as well (Howe, 1981). Deno (1970) has described a cascade of special education services comprising seven different levels, ranging from regular class placement to hospital or other in-patient settings and he suggests that children need to be moved toward more segregated situations only as far as it is necessary, and returned in the direction of level one as rapidly as possible. Paul (1981) indicates that, in general, the closer children are to the regular classroom, the better, as long as they can be provided with appropriate educational experiences.

In 1978, Wiederholt, Hammill, and Brown claimed that the resource program concept would continue to be the model of choice, at least for mildly handicapped children. This approach includes more than just a "resource room" however. Resource teachers may serve as consultants to regular teachers, providing support to the whole school rather than to a select few. Wiederholt, Hammill and Bown described five types of resource program models but declared a strong preference for the fifth model, which is a "non-categorized resource program" designed for children with mild to moderate learning or behavioral problems and includes both handicapped and non-handicapped children. Such a model has been advocated by numerous educational researchers and practitioners. They agree that the model is based on the belief that allocation of funds for resources and support services by categorical disabilities is not justified (Fornes, 1974; Libby, 1977; McDonald, 1968; Prekon and McDonald, 1979; Reger, 1972; Wiederholt, 1974; and Howe, 1981). Howe (1981) suggests that objections to this model may come from the following groups:

1. Watchdogs of categorical special education funds who fear that money will be spent on the non-handicapped.

2. Special education administrators and staff concerned about losing control of a significant portion of the program.

3. Those who have high confidence in their ability to make a differential diagnosis and to assign a categorical label to a child.

Mayer (1982) states that the non-categorical model approach usually includes the following concepts:

1) A single classification exists (re "children with special needs" or "exceptional needs").

2) Classes restricted to one group are abolished for assignment to classes on the basis of educational need.

3) Administration is committed to a continuum of direct programs and supportive services.

4) Students are placed in educational settings that range from full-time assignment to special classes, to full time assignment in regular classes supplemented with supportive services if needed.

5) Appropriate support services that will help the student remain with the least restrictive environment are emphasized.

6) Funding is allocated according to the educational service provided rather than according to a special disability category.

Financing Special Education

Financing special education is closely tied to the service delivery system employed by the state or province, the federal

government, and as one would expect, the local school system. Administrators, responsible for allocating funds at each government level, are presented a unique challenge in the distribution of special education funds. Moore (1982) suggests that there are three major reasons behind this challenge:

1. In the United States, the federal government, states and the courts, together have instituted a mandate that school systems provide "free and appropriate public education" to all school-aged handicapped children. Designing a funding system to address the individual needs of students with diverse requirements presents a challenge to policy-makers accustomed to funding systems that support a standard program for the average child.

2. Special education asks policy-makers to make decisions about matters that are extremely fluid and to some extent subjected to forces beyond their control. Defining the handicapped population and determining what constitutes an appropriate education is a difficult task.

3. Special education challenges policy-makers to make sense out of a complex organizational world of multiple funding sources and a wide array of government agencies and local service providers.

Moore (1982) reports that the following policy areas are identified by state policy-makers as being significant influences on the funding system utilized for special education: defining student eligibility for special education; establishing the range of appropriate services; determining the costs of special education; developing funding sources for special education; and instituting

formulae for the distribution of special education funds. Each of these influences will be discussed in this section.

Defining Student Eligibility For Special Education

The questions of how much should be spent on special education, and how much an adequate education program costs in a particular locale confront policy-makers for special education funding. The answers depend on which children will be provided special education and the services those children will receive (Moore, 1982). A related issue is that of classifying or labeling children; the potential for abuse by over-classifying children exists. Ideally, the funding formula should be neutral with the classification decision based on the characteristics of the child (Hartman, 1980). Moore reports that many American states have collapsed special education categories into broad definitions. For example, California uses four categories: communicatively handicapped, physically handicapped, learning handicapped and severely handicapped. These broad definitions are viewed as a positive step to combating the stigmatizing effects that previous handicapping categories imposed on children.

Moore (1982) claims that states establish eligibility definitions for two purposes: to determine who qualifies for services, and to establish categories of children to serve as a basis for distributing funds. Defining who is eligible for special education services encompasses more than drafting a statement describing who is handicapped; it also involves developing eligibility criteria that

provide a means for assessing whether an individual falls within the definition. Because children are complex and do not conform to precise measurement, definitions and eligibility criteria often are overly rigid and restrictive in the judgments of local practitioners and they can subvert the delivery of special services for children in need (Moore, 1982). They can also cause equally undesirable consequences if the local discretion is too broad and judgments become colored by fiscal reimbursement schemes and local agendas to reduce class size and to remove unruly children from regular classes (Moore, 1982).

Once the characteristics and ages of handicapped children to be served are defined, the next step is to estimate the number of children who qualify for services in an area. Numerical estimates help policy-makers determine fiscal requirements for special education and establish a guide for assessing statewide progress in the provision of special education (Moore, 1982). Moore reports that the number of handicapped children found in any area is a product of several factors that extend beyond definitions, eligibility criteria, and incidence estimates. These factors include local interpretations, fiscal resources and traditions of service.

Policy-makers have the task of finding sufficient funds to meet the relatively broadly defined special education related needs; hence, they feel compelled to institute policies that clarify the student eligibility boundaries of special education (Moore, 1982). Moore identifies four strategies which policy-makers pursue: refine definitions and eligibility criteria for handicapped students; institute upper limits on the numbers of children eligible for funds;

refine funds reimbursement policies to remove incentives to expand programs; and improve implementation schemes to reduce misclassification errors.

Establishing the Range of Appropriate Services

The second major determinant of special education program costs is the range of services that eligible students receive (Moore, 1982). Hartman (1980) believes that the funding formula used should not exert a dominant influence over the choice of the educational programs selected for handicapped children. Two possible problems he discusses are: with higher cost students, a placement may be selected with a greater reimbursement amount when a less restrictive option would be equally or more appropriate; and with lower cost students, a placement may be selected with lower costs to school districts when another higher cost option would be more appropriate.

Moore (1982) reports that special education as defined by U.S. federal law encompasses services which include: individual assessment and diagnosis; development and implementation of individual education programs; educational programs or placements; due process procedures. From the financial perspective, the instructional program constitutes the core of special education, although assessment and due process services also have noteworthy financial implications.

Determining the Costs of Special Education

The costs of providing special education programs is dependent upon the various program arrangements that state and local officials decide constitute special education; the local price of goods and services; and the revenues a district has and chooses to spend on special education (Moore, 1982). According to Moore, state policy-makers consider six major cost questions in the special education area:

1. What should special education cost? Two underlying issues need to be considered: determination of the level of services that eligible students should receive; and determination of the most appropriate and effective mix of classroom resources and instructional practices that will enable children with different handicapping conditions to acquire a desired range of skills.

2. What do current special education programs cost? Two approaches to analyzing costs exist: analyzing records of financial expenditure for special education and related services; and a resource-utilization approach which relies on documenting the mix of resources that are used to educate handicapped children and then translate these resources into dollar costs. Rossmiller (1970), through the National Education Finance Project, found that although special education expenditures varied among districts, they averaged about twice as high as regular education expenditures.

3. What will special education cost if present policies are fully implemented? Moore reports that studies suggest that full policy implementation in special education had not yet been achieved. He

asserts that in order to appropriate funds that foster full policy implementation, policy-makers need to know the costs of special education programming and services they intend districts to deliver.

4. What will special education cost if different policies are implemented? The major problem in estimating the costs of alternate policies is inadequate knowledge (Moore, 1982). According to Hartman (1981), the following variables, arranged in descending order of impact, proved significant in influencing the cost of special education: the number of handicapped children; student-teacher instructional ratios; teacher salaries; use of aides; special day school costs per student and residential program costs; and inflation.

5. Why do special education costs vary? Costs will vary in districts as a result of the number and severity level of the handicapped and the district preferences for using different instructional strategies (Moore, 1982). Costs also vary along an additional set of dimensions such as the mix of students, their ages, the district's size, and costs such as salaries and transportation.

6. What factors will influence future costs? Moore (1982) reports that four aspects of the special education system will likely increase future costs: expansion of the mildly handicapped program due to the lack of clear boundaries; expansion of the secondary school handicapped population as more children are identified in earlier grades; an increase in the average salary grade of special education teachers; and expanded interpretations of appropriate education and related service mandates.

Hartman (1981) conducted a study to assist in the formulation of

policies and allocation of resources for the education of the handicapped. He found that in the 1977-78 school year, the cost of special education in the U.S. was over seven billion dollars with an average per handicapped child cost of approximately 3,577 dollars, 2.17 times more than the cost of regular education per non-handicapped child. Hartman reported that in the 1980-81 school year special education costs were in excess of 10 billion and approximately 4,898 dollars per child. The breakdown of costs per child in 1977-78 was as follows:

Category	Cost ($)
special education teachers	551
aides	106
related services (i.e. speech therapy)	191
assessment	100
placement and I.E.P. development	103
technical assistance from one staff member to another	135
regular transportation	48
special transportation	111
special education administration	87
general district level administration	200
general school level administration	209
food services	38

facility operations and maintenance	378	
interest plus debt retirement	245	
other costs	282	
Total	3,577	per handicapped child

McLure, Burnham and Henderson (1975) studied the needs costs and methods of financing used by the Illinois State department to fund programs for exceptional children. They found that 80 percent of all costs were in salaries for personnel. Program costs were computed for 19 special education categories and analysis revealed that the size of the instructional unit was the only important factor in examining cost differentials. They found that the disability label used made no difference in terms of finance, except in areas such as transporting the physically handicapped. On the basis of their data, McLure et al. recommended that the pupil-teacher ratio be used as the measure by which costs for special education be computed.

Hartman (1980) also investigated the cost for each type of special education class as well as per pupil for each classification of handicap in 1977-78. He found that the most expensive types of service provided are special day schools for the handicapped ($5,352 per child) and itinerant teachers who provide extensive one to one teaching ($5,218 per child). The special class placement with part-time regular class ($4,345 per child), and the regular class placement with part-time special class ($4,709 per child) were the two next most expensive programs.

Hartman (1980) listed expenses per handicapped category. Some of

these are as follows:

Category	Cost ($)
functionally blind	5966 to 11,189
speech impaired in a regular class	2244
speech impaired in a special class	5439
EMH in special class	3265
SMH in special class	7695

Rossmiller, Hale and Frohreich (1970) studied 24 school districts in five states. They found extreme variability in the costs of programs for special education and also in disability areas. They report that the median cost index ranged from 1.14 for programs for the intellectually gifted to 3.64 for physically handicapped (cost index-ratio in which 1.0 represents the cost per pupil in a regular program). Cost indices for individual districts ranged from 1.28 for the intellectually gifted to 11.64 in the area of the emotionally disturbed. Typically, they found that high costs were associated with new programs, small pupil-teacher ratios, and the need for intensive, multiple services.

Hartman (1980) states that if one district has a disproportionate number of severely handicapped children who need high cost placements, the average funding per child would increase substantially. He proposed that a weighting factor be utilized in which funding would be provided according to a predetermined factor.

Thomas (1973) claims that there are two major dilemmas in funding education for the handicapped, that of adequacy and that of equity. He reported that approximately 60 percent of handicapped children remained unserved at that time (1973) and that the dollars existing for special education were raised and distributed unjustly, according to the sentiment of court actions. Thomas feels that the higher cost of education for the handicapped is the major reason given for unequal access for educational opportunity.

Raphael, Singer and Walker (1985) state that it has been found that an approximate 2:1 ratio of expenditures exists between special and regular education. They report that the average per pupil expenditures for all special education students are the result of three effects: the mix of children, the cost of inputs, and educational resources provided to the children. Thomas (1977) claims that the actual costs for operating such programs for handicapped children will vary from approximately two to four times the cost of educating the non-handicapped in regular school programs. Hartman (1980) and Thomas (1977) list the following underlying causes of additional expenditures for special education:

1. The majority of handicapped students receive special education services in addition to regular education and therefore the total cost includes both the cost of regular and special education service.

2. Special students typically are enrolled in smaller, self-contained classes, with lower pupil-teacher ratios.

3. Some special education students require multiple special education related services.

4. Some special education students require residential facilities.

5. Increased transportation costs.

6. Identification, assessment and program planning is done on an individual basis.

7. Federal legislation requires school districts to implement procedures for locating and programming for unserved and underserved handicapped students (ages 3 to 21); to develop individualized education programs; to establish due process procedures; and to fulfill planning, record keeping and reporting requirements in order to qualify for federal funds.

8. A greater age span of students is being served through special education.

9. Additional support staff and special training are necessary.

Vasa and Wendel, in 1982, reported that according to the National School Board Association (U.S.), local school districts' budgets were rising twice as fast for special education (14% annually) as for regular education (7.8% annually).

Developing Funding Sources

Upon reviewing the literature, it becomes evident that opinions vary amongst administrators at all levels as to who should bear the primary responsibility for funding special education programs. The states have always held official jurisdiction over education in America; however, historically, public schooling has been a local phenomenon (Parrish and Chambers, 1982). The seventies and eighties

have seen the states begin to bear the primary responsibility for education in fact as well as principle.

It is argued by many that if legislation requires appropriate or adequate education and if we believe that all children should have equal opportunity to develop to the full extent of their ability, then government aid is easily defensible. Special education had been defined as the equitable allocation of available state and federal funds to provide a comprehensive special education program for handicapped students ages 3 to 21 and for students ages 0 to 22 with serious visual and/or hearing handicaps (Texas Educational Agency, 1979).

Funds for school programs come from three main sources: federal, state and local government. Thomas (1977) states that "much of the procrastination associated with starting new special education programs stems from reluctance or perceived inability of many local administrators and boards of education to put any local tax money into such programs, based on the feeling that funding of these programs is the responsibility of the state or federal government" (p.19).. He believes that the actual responsibility for educating handicapped children rests with the local district.

Maher (1982) states that on a nationwide basis, state funds account for about 55 percent of an operating local education agency's (LEA) income. Because the LEAs do not have equal resources, some local officials suggest that responsibility for special education funding should rest entirely with the state (Maher, 1982). Bernstein, Hartman, and Marshall (1976) claim that greater state funding can be justified

by the following three items:

1. Parents of severely handicapped children have selectively migrated to certain areas where services are available. Thus, some districts have higher costs than others.

2. Some local education agencies tend to ignore the needs of children who have more severe problems because providing programs for these children is too costly.

3. Wealth is unevenly distributed among various local districts.

The implementation of PL94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975), brought with it expectations that a level of funding would be provided through the federal budget which would support the directions of the Act. The funding formula for PL94-142 is based on the national average expenditure per pupil established annually (Gearhart and Wright, 1979). This figure is multiplied by a fixed percentage figure which is in turn multiplied by the number of handicapped children ages 3-21 receiving special education and related services in a state. Of the resulting sum given to a state, 75 percent must go to school districts and the state may use the remaining 25 percent for state level services to handicapped children, plus an additional five percent of the total sum or 200,000 dollars, whichever is greater, for state administration costs. Maher (1982) reports that PL94-142 authorizes federal funding which is calculated to cover 40 percent of the excess cost of special education programs based on the national average per pupil expenditure.

Instituting Formulas for the Distribution of Special Education Funds

Crowner (1985) defines a number of terms used in discussion of educational finance and funding formulae:

base - elements upon which revenues are figured

formula - method used to compute revenues

source - agency from which revenues flow

type - restrictions placed on the possible use of revenues

Bases:

Pupil base - funds based on number of pupils served

Resource base - teachers, personnel, supplies, equipment, facilities

Service base - resource room, self-contained class, et cetera

Cost base - funds based on the district's actual cost of operating a program

Unit base - funds based on a combination of two or more other bases

Funds:

Continuing funds - continues from year to year

Noncontinuing funds - available for fixed period of time only

Targeted funds - must be spent on a prescribed item

Discretionary funds - may be spent on an item deemed relevant to

the objectives of a given agency's mission

Inside formula funds - are funds which an agency receives from one source which must be deducted from any costs reported for reimbursement from another source

Outside formula funds - funds an agency receives which will not be deducted from its primary source

Matching funds - those available from a source only if matched equally or in part by funds from another source

Formula:

Excess cost formula - takes the cost of a basic education program, compares that figure to the cost of a given special education program and then applies funding to make up some or all of the discrepant cost

Percent of cost formula - revenue is limited to a fractional percentage of the real cost associated with a base

Straight sum formula - applies a fixed reimbursement for each base element reported

Weighted formula - applies differential weights to base elements; weights may be based on indices of actual costs or on perceived relative need

Mixed formula - combination of other formulae

Hartman (1980) identified six types of formulae in common use for special education:

Unit - Fixed amount for each qualified unit of instruction,

administration and transport. Funding is for cost of resources necessary to operate the unit.

Personnel - Funding for all or part of salaries of personnel working with handicapped children

Weight - Each handicapped child is funded an amount of money based on a factor or weight which varies by type of handicap

Straight sum - A fixed amount of money is allocated for each handicapped child

Percentage - A percentage of approved costs of educating handicapped children is provided

Excess cost - Additional costs of educating handicapped children are reimbursed in part or full

Crowner (1985) reports that the focus of the 1980's has shifted from a question of whether society should serve the handicapped to whether the current system of fiscal support and governance of special education is the most efficient and effective way to support services for exceptional students. Arguments arising from this focus relate to the following questions:

a) Who are the handicapped?

b) Is the rapid growth of services for the mildly handicapped cause for concern?

c) Should fiscal support for the handicapped occur at the expense of other needy children?

d) What is the best way to pay for the services?

These questions are ones which should be given serious

consideration as administrators develop and implement systems for distributing fiscal support. Funding formulae should be designed with these questions in mind as they apply to the particular district or unit.

Formulae used to fund general education usually serve as a base for funding special education programs (Maher, 1982). Hartman (1980) defined the use of formulae as a mechanism for transferring dollars earmarked for educating handicapped students from one government level to another or from government level to district level. Funding formulae for special education would also include mechanisms devised at the district level for distribution of funds which are allocated for special education by the government as well as by local taxpayers. Bernstein (1979) describes funding formulae as encompassing mandated procedures, prorated provisions, administrative guidelines, exceptions or exclusions that determine and regulate the allocation of state (and federal) funds to districts. Hartman believes that funding levels would be basically identical under any formula, therefore, the choice of formula becomes important for the incentives and disincentives it may create for school districts in providing adequate, appropriate programs and services for handicapped children.

Parrish and Chambers (1982) report that the most common approach to allocating educational resources in the states applies "foundation" and "classification" definitions of equity. A foundation approach is one which implies a guarantee of some prescribed minimum for all students. Classification relates to the categorical versus non-categorical issue which was discussed earlier. Parrish and Chambers

relate this to vertical equity, with certain classifications of pupils being designated as eligible to receive prescribed resource supplements, determined on the basis of exceptional learning characteristics. The question of whether a funding system should rely on categorizations of handicapped pupils will be discussed further in this section as the various models are presented.

Hartman (1980) believes that "none of the funding formulas is a perfect answer; each involves compromises among important but possibly conflicting programmatic and measurement issues" (p. 14). Resource based formulae, for example, offer reduced incentive for overclassification. More students classified as handicapped can yield more units or personnel but the linkage is less direct than child-based formulae where each additional student receives additional funds (Hartman, 1980). However, maximization of class size as a cost reduction may be encouraged. A disadvantage of such a model would be when districts have too few students and have to have a minimum number of students to receive funds.

An alternative to providing funds on a resource basis is child-based funding. However, such a system is most likely to encourage overclassification when the reimbursement amount depends directly on the number of handicapped children (Hartman, 1980). Hartman points out that the straight-sum, child-based formula in particular encourages identification of an increased number of mildly handicapped children and minimizes the number of severely handicapped children identified. Overclassification abuses can be controlled, Hartman states, by regulations establishing limitations on the proportion of students

classified as handicapped, either in total, or by category. Child-based formulae also provide the greatest incentive to include unserved or underserved students in special education programs. Districts may also be encouraged to place children in the higher reimbursement program if there are different dollar amounts by type of program.

A third alternative Hartman (1980) introduces is the cost-based formula. This formula offers the least incentive for overclassification; however, if the district's share in the costs is significant, there will be an incentive to place handicapped children in lower cost programs, to resist changes from low to high cost programs, and to encourage changes from high to low cost programs. Such a formula would decrease the tendency to label students and could be used effectively with a mainstreaming model. (See Appendix O for a summary of incentives and disincentives of the three basic funding formulae presented by Hartman.)

The manner in which a district allocates its funds for special education is directed to a great extent by the government's funding scheme, as well as by regulations and guidelines developed by the government. Further discussion of U.S. federal and state funding schemes is warranted here.

Gearhart and Wright (1979) report that The Council for Exceptional Children has completed numerous studies of state reimbursement systems and has concluded that there are at least two general categories of support with subcategories within these general categories:

a) Unit Support or Per Class Reimbursement. Reimbursement would be based on a flat amount for each appropriate class or program

operated by the school district. Limits would be placed on class size, age range, and teacher training qualifications.

b) Per-pupil Reimbursement is provided on the principle of providing state aid based on a guarantee of a minimum level of support for each child in a district (Thomas, 1977). There are three general types of per-pupil reimbursement:

i) Excess cost per pupil - The cost of educating the average, non-exceptional child is used as a base.

ii) Flat amount per exceptional pupil.

iii) Weighted Value - A multiplier or weighted value is used to represent the added cost per pupil. For example, if the average cost of educating the non-handicapped is 700 dollars and the multiplier for EMH children is two and for TMH is three, then the reimbursements would be 1400 and 2100 dollars respectively. One of the problems with per pupil reimbursement is, because it is based upon the number of children involved in a program there can be pressure placed on the staff involved to fill the class prior to the counting days (Thomas, 1977).

Thomas (1973) outlines six general categories of state fiscal support procedures:

1. Unit Financing - A fixed sum is reimbursed by the state for each designated unit of classroom instruction, administration, and transportation. This procedure has several problems: districts will tend to maximize class size to decrease per pupil cost; small districts will be unable to qualify for units for ancillary services and administration; costs incurred through mainstreaming would not be reimbursed; higher costs during the first year of the program would not

be reimbursed; and children may be inappropriately placed in a program with a lower per pupil expenditure when units are allocated for differing class sizes on the basis of a child's disability.

2. Weighted Formula System. Districts are reimbursed for the per pupil expenditure multiplied by a factor which may vary by disability. Rossmiller, Hale and Frohreich (1970) arrived at the following weights after analyzing program costs for handicapped children in five states:

Educable Mentally Handicapped	1.87
Trainable Mentally Handicapped	2.10
Auditorily Handicapped	2.99
Visually Handicapped	2.97
Speech Handicapped	1.18
Physically Handicapped	3.67
Learning Disabled	2.16
Emotionally Disturbed	2.83
Multiply Handicapped	2.73
Homebound	1.42

One of the limitations of this system, Thomas reports, is that unless the multiplier is applied to each district's per pupil cost as opposed to an average state cost, districts with high educational costs will not receive equitable reimbursement. In addition, if a similar multiplier is used for all children, districts are discouraged from initiating programs for children with disabilities requiring higher expenditures. Finally, if districts receive a percentage of the multiplier from the state and have to expend an equal amount, there would be a disincentive to provide programs for children with high cost

disabilities.

3. Percentage Reimbursement. Using this system, full or partial percentage of all costs for special education are reimbursed. The downfall is that school systems may be tempted to place children in the least expensive program. Without constraints, this system can be viewed by legislators and others as having the potential for an unlimited raid on the state treasury and a dumping ground for special education.

4. Reimbursement for Personnel. Funds are distributed to offset costs incurred by the hiring of special staff. The model allows need contingencies to be adequately matched by financial assistance. However, if no allocations are given for personnel who work with mainstreamed children, this model encourages special class placement.

5. Straight Sum Reimbursement. A set amount of money would be issued for each handicapped child. A pre-determined number of children are not required for the district to obtain funding. One disadvantage of this system is that it encourages labeling and matching of placement and encourages a district to maximize the class size.

6. Excess Cost Formula. School districts determine the per pupil cost of educating handicapped children and then subtract from this amount the cost of educating a nonhandicapped pupil in the same district. The difference is then reimbursed. If excess costs are fully funded, then theoretically the district is encouraged to make the best placement for the child, as doing so causes no extra financial burden. When the payment is a percentage of the excess, school districts encounter the same problem as with the percentage approach.

In 1981, in the United States, the Reagan Administration established and implemented the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA), a system for distributing federal money to the states that combined the funding for 42 separate categorical programs into one block grant (Hearn, 1982). The ECIA was intended to simplify compensatory education programs for disadvantaged children, consolidate categorical education grant programs, reduce federal regulations, transfer administrative authority for elementary and secondary education to state educational agencies, and provide transportation for program design and expenditure of federal funds to local educational agencies (Committee on Government Operations, 1983).

Chapter one of the ECIA replaced the compensatory education program for the poor, educationally deprived children; more than 40 other categorical education programs were consolidated into chapter two of the ECIA (Committee on Governmental Operations, 1983). Chapter 2 of the Act allows state educational agencies (SEA) to keep up to 20 percent of the chapter two funds for state use, but the remaining 80 percent of the state's allocation must be passed directly to LEAs (Committee on Governmental Operations, 1983). Under this chapter, the SEAs and LEAs can use the funds at their discretion, provided they are used for one of the 29 broad categories contained in chapter two (Committee on Governmental Operations, 1983). LEAs also have sole discretion for the use of chapter one funds, provided the monies are used to assist poor, educationally deprived school children (Committee on Governmental Operations, 1983). It became the state's responsibility to devise formulae for funding local education agencies.

The block grant strategy is based on the conviction that LEAs should be given control and flexibility in the use of funds (Hearn, 1982). This new concept was not readily accepted by state and especially by local administrators. Some superintendents responded by asking, "If there are no regulations, how are we to know what to do?" (Hearn, 1982) Concern was expressed that small schools especially would have difficulty providing for high-cost pupils. Section 565 of the ECIA requires that the SEA adjust its formula to provide higher per pupil allocations to LEAs that have the greatest number or percentage of children whose education imposes a higher than average cost per child (Hearn, 1982).

Hearn (1982) reports that some administrators suggested that a minimum level of funding per LEA would need to be built into the formula to ensure a viable program, and to support the education of high-cost pupils. Hearn concluded that block grants advance the small school cause in several ways; however, small schools will receive very small allocations unless states compensate in their formulae for small size, number and isolation.

On November 15, 1983, the Committee on Government Operations approved and adopted a report entitled "Block Grants Have Weakened Federal Programs for the Educationally Disadvantaged." The committee assigned to the "Subcommittee on Intergovernment Relations and Human Resources" the task of reviewing the Department of Education's implementation of block grant programs established by chapters one and two of the ECIA (Committee on Government Operations, 1983). Interviews were conducted with individuals involved in the block grant process,

including parents, teachers, research experts and LEA and SEA officials, and the Department (Committee on Government Operations, 1983).

In September of 1983, the subcommittee's review of block grant programs culminated in a hearing which included testimony from parents, teachers, unions, civil rights experts, researchers, and officials of LEAs, SEAs, and the Department (Committee on Government Operations, 1983). The testimony focused on reductions in educational civil rights programs, the shift of federal education funds from large urban school districts to rural districts, the decrease of parental involvement in the decision-making processes, and the need for federal regulations to assure funding for disadvantaged students with special needs. Listed below is a summary of the findings and conclusions of the subcommittee:

1. Federal programs designed to guarantee civil rights and provide equal access to education were weakened by the switch from categorical grants to block grants.

2. The Department of Education has failed to assure that chapter two funding formulae require an equitable distribution of funds.

3. The Department did not require that funds targeted for needy students be spent on those students.

4. The use of chapter two funds is concentrated on instructional materials and supplies, to the neglect of other programs designed to encourage innovation and educational opportunity.

5. The chapter two block grant causes a shift from urban areas to rural areas.

6. The auditing and evaluation procedures established by the

Department do not require sufficient accountability of education block grant expenditures.

7. The Department is not providing adequate assistance to SEAs and LEAs.

8. Public participation in federal education funding decisions has been reduced by the block grants.

9. Federal education programs assist educationally disadvantaged students when program goals are targeted.

Based on the above findings and conclusions the subcommittee made the following recommendations (Committee on Government Operations, 1983):

A. The Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) (1983) should be reauthorized as a separate categorical program. The investigation found that school districts with voluntary or court-ordered desegregation plans lost large amounts of aid due to the consolidation of ESAA into the block grant. State and local agencies were unable to compensate for the losses and therefore, desegregation efforts were hindered.

B. The Department of Education should promulgate a regulation to standardize the definition of equitable allocation of funds under chapter two of the ECIA.

C. The Department should promulgate a regulation to assure that funding for programs designed to assist educationally disadvantaged students and educationally deprived students be spent only on those students.

D. The Department, should, upon request, provide technical

assistance to state and local educational agencies.

Distribution of Funds for Special Education: The Canadian Perspective

The information which is presented in this section was collected through telephone conversations with education officials in the education departments of various provinces in Canada, a Report Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada on "The Funding and Costs of Special Education," as well as through various articles and documents obtained from the provincial departments.

British Columbia.

The province of B.C. funds from 60 to 100 percent of the operating costs for school districts, depending upon the district's ability to pay (Kelly, 1985). The per-pupil grant provided includes all special education students in the formula. For special education, major categories are identified and funded in differing manners based on programs and "units" of pupils. The categories identified are as follows:

Low-Incidence High Cost

Trainable Mentally Handicapped

Severe, Profound or Physically Handicapped

Visually Impaired

Hearing Impaired or Autistic

High-Incidence Low Cost (A):

Severely Learning Disabled

Educable Mentally Handicapped

Severely Behaviorally Handicapped

Rehabilitation

High-Incidence Low-Cost (B):

English as a Second Language

Indian

Gifted

In addition to funding pupils categorically, this province funds special education for identification and planning, school-based administration, special health services, and a provincial resource program.

The Ministry of Education, Province of British Columbia (1985), states in policy that the government provides special grant funding to school districts for programs approved by the Special Education Division of the Ministry. Policy states that "programs will only receive funding if they are judged by the Special Education Division to be the most appropriate and least-restrictive to the child" (p. 1). Local programming is the only acceptable response if the home district could provide suitable programs through other provincial funding provisions.

Saskatchewan

This province provides basic per-pupil grants which vary according

to division. In addition to the basic grant, incremental grants are provided for specific segments of the population. The rates of these grants in 1984 were as follows (Kelly, 1985):

Comprehensive	$ 225
Low-Cost Special Education	$1258
High Cost Special Education	
Level I	$3691
Level II	$4972
Level III	$5617

The provision of high-cost grants is contingent upon the identification of students with severe handicaps, provision of a program appropriate to the educational needs of the student, and the employment of qualified teaching staff to provide that program.

The province also provides for the transportation costs associated with the educational needs of disabled students.

Manitoba

In addition to the funding allocated to school districts for all students, the Manitoba government provides funding for special education in the form of four grants (Kelly, 1985):

High Incidence Support

Low Incidence Support I

Low Incidence Support II

Coordinator and Clinician Support

High Incidence Support includes funding for resource room

programs, gifted, and occupational programs. The number of eligible units is determined based on eligible enrolments. Support was provided at $23,000 for each eligible unit in 1983 (Manitoba Gazette, July, 1983).

Low Incidence Support, in 1983, allocated $3,300 for each child in the Support I category (T.M.H., moderately multi-handicapped, severely hearing impaired, severely visually impaired, very severely learning disabled, or very severely emotionally disturbed), and $6,600 for each child in the low-incidence pupil II category (severely multi-handicapped, severely psychotic or autistic, or profoundly deaf).

Coordinator and Clinician Support is also provided based on eligible units. The greater of the number of employed qualified personnel times $34,100 for one coordinator and $31,000 for each remaining clinician, and the total eligible enrolment divided by $900, would be provided to each district.

Provincial support is also offered in a number of areas related to special education: vocational industrial support, immigrant pupil support, print and non-print materials support, extra-operating support and capital support (school buses and vocational equipment) (Manitoba Gazette, August, 1981).

Ontario

A per pupil grant is provided to districts by the government for all elementary and secondary students, including special education

students. In 1985 this grant was $2,396 and $3,275 for elementary and secondary students respectively. Kelly (1985) reports that an amount is included within the regular per pupil amount in recognition of the additional expenditures incurred by a board in the provision of a basic level of special educational programs and services. In addition, a general special education grant provided on a fixed dollar amount per pupil is provided. In 1985, $185 per elementary child and $132 per secondary child was provided.

Programs for trainable retarded pupils receive additional funding from the government. A per-pupil amount recognized for grant purposes comparable to the elementary per pupil amount ($2,396 for 1985) is allocated for each trainable retarded pupil enrolled as a day school or summer school resident-internal or resident-external pupil. This regular per-pupil amount is adjusted by a trainable retarded weighting factor. This factor is equal to:

a) 1.09 for all boards located in a territorial district north of the French River that do not include a city or town with a population in excess of 25,000 within their jurisdiction.

b) 1.06 for all other boards located in a territorial district and boards in a district municipality or a county that was a provisional county in 1982.

c) 1.0 for all boards other than those referred to in a) and b) above.

In addition, for 1985, an amount equal to $4,100 per trainable retarded pupil will be paid to the board because of the additional expenditure incurred by a board in the provision of programs for pupils

enrolled in a class or school for trainable retarded pupils. This amount will be adjusted by the weighting factor described above.

The province also funds three schools for the deaf, one for the blind, and three demonstration schools for learning disabled and aphasic students. Should a school board set up a program in lieu of a provincial program, subject to Ministerial approval, the program would receive provincial funding.

The province also provides funding for transportation costs of pupils for whom the province pays the cost of education, exceptional pupils to and from an educational program at specific institutions, and children to and from centres affiliated with the Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded.

Quebec

The funding for special education in Quebec comes mainly from the general budgetary fund. It consists of a base allocation which is dependent on the number of pupils, and supplemental allocations provided in response to additional requests (Kelly, 1985). The base allocation includes funds for teaching personnel based on pupil-teacher ratios. This allocation also covers non-teaching personnel for special education students. The supplemental funds for both pilot and ongoing activities related to special education are allocated on a needs basis (Kelly, 1985). These funds are managed by regional offices of the Ministry.

Biron (1983) discusses the impact of economic conditions on the

delivery of special education services in Quebec. He reports that

> for more than ten years the funding of services for pupils with special education needs has been determined, as far as teaching personnel are concerned, by the teacher/pupil ratio contained in the collective agreements. Starting 1983-84 teacher-pupil ratios were abolished; however, the government continued to fund personnel based on the ratios. The disappearance from the collective agreements of ratios ... will allow the school boards greater latitude in deciding whether they will adhere to the group formation rules (average and maximum levels) and to put to other uses the savings thus incurred (p. 229).

Budget cuts which were made in Quebec by a maximum of five percent forced boards to economize or offset expenses with their own revenues (Kelly, 1985). Biron (1983) reports that "it is widely recognized that a period of budgetary restraint tends to produce more efficient use of available resources" (p. 233). The decentralization of powers in the school systems has permitted school boards to absorb, according to their own system of priorities, the cuts in budget made by the government (Biron, 1983). Biron reports that this greater autonomy of local management fostered the appearance of brand new varieties of service organizations.

Newfoundland

The government of Newfoundland provides school boards with 100 percent of the cost of all teachers' salaries based on a government determined pupil-teacher ratio, and 90 percent of transportation costs. For special education, the number of teachers allocated varies from one for every twelve pupils to one for every four, depending upon the level of disability. Grants ranging from $20 to $170 per special education

pupil per year are paid to assist with teaching supplies. For pupils who are profoundly handicapped, the department negotiates a special grant to cover salaries of teachers and support staff. The government also pays 100 percent of the costs for students in provincial programs, such as the school for the deaf.

Nova Scotia

In Nova Scotia, a global fund is provided to school districts by the province for a basic level of education and support services. The grant allocated is based on the number of student units (i.e. 1.0 - elementary, 1.2 - secondary, 2.5 - vocational). Special education students are included in this count. A special education grant is also provided by the province in a prescribed formula based on the total number of enrolled students. In 1984, this grant was $122 per pupil. "This grant is intended to provide funds for programs and services to children who have a handicap which interferes with the child's ability to learn successfully in a regular classroom" (Kelly, 1985, p. 2).

Prince Edward Island

This province provides an allocation for total staffing based on pupil-teacher ratios of 19.3:1 for academic students and 14.0:1 for vocational students. In addition, allocations for staff for students in child development and learning difficulties are provided at a ratio of 5:1 or 6:1. These students are not counted in the general funding

ratios. The province also pays 100 percent of equipment costs and may provide supplementary funds to cover additional costs related to special education.

New Brunswick

The government of New Brunswick provides both formula and non-formula grants and designated funds for special programs. Three special program areas receive designated funds: the comprehensive plan, auxiliary classes, and the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority, which is described in the next section. The comprehensive plan provides funds for diagnosis, programming and instructional services for students with learning disabilities. The program provides funds on a per-pupil basis of up to $3,300, when these funds are matched by school districts. The auxiliary classes program provides classes for severely, profoundly, and multi-handicapped children. Using a pupil-teacher ratio of 8:1 as a guideline, the province funds the total cost of this program.

Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA)

The APSEA was established under agreement by the four Ministers of Education from the provinces of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick. Its mandate is to provide educational programs, services, and facilities for children with low-incident handicaps. Three programs are offered: resource centers for

the hearing handicapped and the visually handicapped, and a residential school program for severely learning disabled school-aged children. Administration and consulting costs are allocated to each of the four provinces based on their general population according to Statistics Canada census figures (Kelly, 1985). Kelly also reports that operating costs of the on-campus programs for the two resource centers are allocated on the basis of numbers of pupils receiving the services. One hundred percent of off-campus costs are paid by the province receiving the service.

The report prepared for The Council of Ministers of Education (Canada) by Kelly, in 1985, discusses factors which appeared to have the greatest impact on special education programs, services, and costs over the past five years in Canada. Kelly identifies these factors as follows:

a) Continued escalation of mainstreaming and integration practices.

b) A trend in government policies toward de-institutionalization which puts increasing demands on schools for special education programs.

c) A broadening range of programs and staffing within the special education areas, including such areas as gifted and multi-handicapped.

d) Better identification methods available to assess children going into programs.

e) Regulatory requirements for boards to produce services for special education children.

Factors which have had an impact on costs of special education

were identified by Kelly as:

a) Integration and deinstitutionalization.

b) A policy of having programs for all children.

c) Increasing costs of teacher salaries.

d) Increase in transportation costs.

e) Greater numbers of severely handicapped children requiring services.

f) Increased availability of more sophisticated, varied and specialized services.

Kelly reports that the increasing numbers of special education students, brought about by the various factors outlined here, such as expectations and demand for programs and equality of access to these programs has been the major factor in increasing costs in the special education area.

The Rural Issue

The size and location of a school district are factors which have a significant effect on the impact of a particular service delivery system and/or funding scheme utilized by a state, province, or district. Howe (1981) reports that 53.6 percent of all school districts in the United States have an enrolment of 1,000 or less. In 1975, the U.S. Census determined there were more than 15,000,000 children in non-metropolitan schools (Weatherman, 1983) or approximately one-third of all students (Mayer, 1982). Using a ten percent incidence rate of handicapped children this would mean roughly

1.5 million handicapped students live in rural areas. Weatherman reports, however, that estimates of the U.S. Bureau of the census (1976) placed this figure at one-tenth this number, which he believes probably reflects a failure to identify handicapped children in rural areas.

Sher (1978) found that at least 5.3 percent of all rural school-aged children are not enrolled in any school, nearly twice the non-enrolment found in urban areas. He believes a major reason for non-attendance is handicapping conditions and the lack of available special education services and/or lack of parental information concerning such services. This enrolment problem would serve to explain to some extent, the difficulties in identifying the rural-handicapped.

Comparisons of urban and rural schools point to some significant differences which clearly influence the ability of rural schools to deliver special education services (Weatherman, 1983). In particular, Weatherman reports that rural schools often have more financial constraints due to a lower tax base; greater expenditures for transportation which reduces the funds available for education; a lack of specialized equipment, teaching materials, and access to outside resources such as universities; fewer experienced, well-trained specialized teachers and administrators; more limited course offerings; more student absenteeism; in general, more isolation from other cultural influences; and fewer ancilliary services. Weatherman (1983) suggests that "the most serious problem which underlies or compounds many of the more specific delivery issues in rural areas is the lack of a clearly defined regional structure of service delivery for

handicapped persons" (p. 10).

Weatherman (1983) discusses the steps to developing a model for rural special education service delivery. The first step is a "needs assessment" conducted to determine the needs of the population in the district. The assessment would consider the capabilities of the current structures and programs to deliver a comprehensive system of services. It would also determine the extent of support at the local, regional, and state levels for the goals of the proposed model, and the gaps and duplications in the present system. Different methods of service delivery could then be compared with respect to their differential effectiveness in providing services which are community-based; are integrated with non-handicapped students; cover the full range of educational needs; are cost effective; and offer a uniform system of special education services and related support services within the particular administrative structure (Weatherman, 1983).

A needs assessment study conducted by the Minnesota Severely Handicapped Delivery System Project pointed to the following gaps which still exist in rural settings (Weatherman, 1983):

1. There is an absence of an efficient, coordinated system for delivery of special education.

2. There is an absence of specifically defined criteria for identification and assessment of handicapped children.

3. Particular populations are underidentified and underserved (i.e. - severely emotionally disturbed).

4. Systematic personnel development activities are needed.

5. Assessment and IEP development practices need improvement.

6. Vocational and related services are needed for post high school youth.

7. Increased coordination and interagency agreements are needed.

8. Data collection and monitoring procedures need improvement.

9. Information dissemination gaps regarding existing services, resources and technologies impede effective service delivery.

Howe (1981) identifies the following problems which special education administrators face in rural districts:

1) Providing programs for small numbers of children.

2) Locating school sites in appropriate geographical areas.

3) Arranging transportation for students attending centralized programs.

4) Hiring teachers who can cover several grade levels or subjects.

5) Hiring staff members who can serve in a variety of capacities.

6) Qualifying for state and federal funds.

7) Obtaining an income that will adequately finance school programs.

8) Obtaining such resources as books, equipment and supplies.

Wallace (1979) believes that the major challenge facing rural administrators is how to deliver special education effectively to small numbers of handicapped children who are scattered geographically. Serving low-incidence handicapped children in particular is of major concern to administrators in rural districts (Helge, 1983). Such children typically have visual and hearing impairments, emotional and behavioral disorders, severe orthopedic disabilities, severe mental handicaps, or multiple handicaps.

Urban communities have the population density which allows grouping by type of disability, with specialists matched to the category of handicap, if that type of service is desirable. A particular child in a rural area may require services from a number of specialists. Weatherman (1983) reports that in an area in which the total population density ranges from 10 to 60 persons per square mile, there may be only two or three handicapped children. Howe (1981) claims that in a district of 1,000 students, 115 will be in special education, spread across eleven diagnostic classifications, and with disabilities of varying degrees of severity. Identification of an adequate number of students for group instruction poses a major problem in school districts of this size. Howe asserts that the establishment of a service delivery policy and development of procedures for provision of special services for low-incidence handicapping conditions should be deliberated, determined, and communicated through the special education service delivery system. Weatherman (1983) concludes that "even the best intentioned rural districts would find it virtually impossible to fully meet the needs of one or two handicapped students on a local, independent basis" (p. 8). The accepted rural practice has become to send such students to larger centers which have highly specialized professional staff.

The problems with sending children out-of-district for institutionalized education, or to obtain part-time specialized services are the transportation costs and the long bus rides for children (Shrag, 1979). Alternative methods of providing service to handicapped students often need to be considered because of these

difficulties. Developing programs cooperatively with other districts, tuition contracting, itinerant teachers and consultants, telecommunication programs, community resources and volunteers, and non-categorical special classes are some possible means of providing the necessary programs and services.

Many school systems make cooperative arrangements with other districts in order to provide a full spectrum of services to their special needs students. Silver (1984) reports that cooperative arrangements, in 33 states which she surveyed, ranged from as few as 7 to as many as 81 school districts. In addition, they vary in the type of services provided, with some serving as advisory agencies or regulatory bodies.

Helge (1983) reports that the predominant cooperative model involves hiring one or more itinerant specialists who travel as needed to isolated students requiring specialized services. These services range from direct instruction of children to training staff and consulting with parents. However, itinerant staff have not been a panacea as cooperatives frequently have not been able to afford to hire a full-time itinerant for two or three low-incidence handicapped children (Helge, 1983). In addition, program continuity is difficult when a person with specialized training related to a child's disability is able to visit only a few times per year (Helge).

Helge (1984) proposes eight prerequisites for a successful cooperative venture:

1) Decentralization of services where possible.

2) Creation of staff roles that emphasize networking to accomplish

service delivery.

3) Clearly established goals, policies, and accountability systems and staff job descriptions.

4) Responsibility for regular and special education aspects of service delivery.

5) Realistic perspective regarding interagency collaboration and district motivation to become involved.

6) Open agenda setting.

7) Creation of local support for change across the collaboration so that local agendas do not conflict with those of the collaboration.

8) Allowing for divergent goals of each unit of the collaborative.

Silver (1984) suggests that successful cooperative arrangements may prove difficult to achieve. Problems which seem to arise are high transportation costs, conflict over cooperative priorities and programs, and difficulty achieving consensus with a variety of administrators (Silver, 1984). Silver also indicates that cooperatives often have difficulty attaining and keeping personnel. The literature reveals a yearly attrition rate of 30 to 50 percent of special education personnel in rural areas. Such attrition has been attributed to the large amount of travel, lack of time allocated for paper work, unclear lines of responsibility and the lack of resources. In addition, when cost effectiveness becomes the overriding goal, individual district's needs and students' needs may be submerged in decision-making. This problem could inhibit provision of a greater range of higher quality programs, an area that should be a strength for cooperatives (Silver, 1984). Silver concludes by suggesting that

because of all the potential difficulties, "the efficacy of the cooperative model for the administration of special education programs in rural areas is certainly questionable" (p. 24).

The cooperative model has been implemented at the state level. The establishment of intermediate education units (IEU) has constituted a direct assault on the problem of getting special education services to those in need, where the individual school district population is too small to warrant full services (Burrello and Sage, 1979). In an IEU, regional specialists are utilized to provide technical assistance and consultation to local district personnel , and to provide inservice to professionals at the district level. In addition, some IEU's have centralized media and materials' centers or mobile materials' centers.

Burrello and Sage (1979) report that in many situations this type of organization has not adequately dealt with the situation. They suggest that in sparsely populated areas, even after maximum redistribution or cooperative organization has been accomplished, the distribution of pupils needing service is such that the usual means of transporting them daily to any type of specialized group instruction is not feasible.

A number of projects have demonstrated that a variety of inservice training packages and consultative assistance can be effective in upgrading teacher skills in remote areas (Weatherman, 1983). However, Weatherman reports that this practice has not been incorporated into common practice on a large scale despite its signs of promise; "most rural districts continue to follow the practice of sending the child to a specialized program, regardless of the distance involved" (p. 9).

Some rural school districts have implemented a non-categorical resource room model (Helge, 1983). These districts have too few students with any particular disability to warrant segregated classes. Helge reports that of the programs observed, the strongest are those with the greatest interaction between the non-categorical resource teacher and regular educators. Use of statewide itinerant specialists, state consultants, cooperative organization at the district level and telecommunications models have been utilized to supplement or in some cases replace the non-categorical resource room model.

Helge (1983) lists the following factors which should be considered for the rural service delivery model planner: relationship of district governance system to external resources; population sparsity; distance from student to services needed; geographic barriers; language spoken in the community; cultural diversity; economic lifestyles of the community; community communication and power structures; ages of students to be served; types and severity levels of districts to be served; history of special education services in the district; currently available resources; cost efficiency; and expertise and attitudes of existing personnel. Helge (1983) asserts that consideration of the interrelationships of these variables is critical and should be weighted more heavily than single-factor barriers to service delivery.

Burrello and Sage (1979) attempted to provide a comprehensive four-dimensional model for service delivery for special education in rural areas that would consider all the relevant variables. The first dimension, number of children to be served, varies as a function of

each of the other dimensions. The second dimension deals with population density. The more sparsely populated the area, the fewer children need service within each programming alternative. The third dimension is concerned with the severity of the handicap. Least severely handicapped students would receive services in a school-based program, while the more severely handicapped would require services in institutional-based facilities. The fourth dimension involves the location from which the services are provided. Most students would be served from school-based or regional-based programs. The more severe the condition or the more sparsely populated the area, the greater the use of home-based or institutional-based programs. A method of communication which can be utilized in this model is telecommunication, through a telephone installed in a child's home, television placed in the home, broadcasting the classroom setting at home, as well as case conferencing for administrators and staff involved with a child. The model makes use of parent trainers with supportive services in which a teacher visits the home periodically to record student progress and consult with the parent. A regional special part or full time class could also be employed where an area has just enough students to fill a classroom but not a single school, and where there is too great a transportation distance between the schools. An alternate living program would be arranged for some children in which they would live with surrogate parents during the school week, receive their education in that district, and go home on weekends. The school district would reimburse the surrogate parents the expenses for having the child live with them..

One of the most significant facets influencing the provision of special programs and services to exceptional students is the cost factor. Weatherman (1983) suggests that a critical area to examine involves the relationships between funding available, the strategies for allocating these monies and the impact on different aspects of the service system. For example, although preschool services may be more costly in the short-term, they may reduce long-term impairment and dependency and hence, be cost efficient.

Shrag (1979) reports that the two major finance problems in rural school districts are the uneven geographic distribution of property and income wealth and the sparsity of population that leads to higher educational expenditures. The cost of transporting handicapped pupils, the higher cost per pupil for instructional salaries and administration costs due to smaller enrollments, as well as the higher costs of energy and maintenance are examples of the expenses which smaller districts incur. In addition, special services are often more expensive as they often have to be contracted on a part-time basis at more expensive prices. These difficulties faced by administrators in rural school systems and those discussed previously in this section can be dealt with in a manner which will allow these districts to provide adequate services to their special education students. It becomes clear, however, that involvement and commitment on the part of parents, the community, teachers and administrators, as well as the governing body, is required if these services are to be comparable to those available in larger urban centers.

Summary of the Literature Review

The service delivery system and the funding mechanism utilized by the governing system and/or the local school district are the means by which special needs children receive the educational and supplementary services they require to develop to their maximum potential. Lathen (1983) states that the special education service delivery system utilized provides the structure through which identification, assessment, placement and instructional services will be delivered to handicapped children.

One of the major issues regarding service delivery systems for special needs pupils is the categorical versus non-categorical approach to service delivery. The predominant model utilized up until about 15 years ago was the self-contained class. Since that time, the movement has been toward integration, deinstitutionalization and what educators have come to know as the "least restrictive environment" (LRE). Deno's Cascade Model is one in which a child is placed in the LRE and moved toward a less restricted environment as he develops. This model is one which has been widely adopted by school systems in the United States, in Canada, and in Alberta in particular.

The resource program model is one which has become more and more common as the trend toward the LRE has been adopted by school systems. A resource model involves more than just the traditional pull-out resource room which is a program in which students leave their regular classroom for a number of periods per week to receive special instruction in their area(s) of weakness. This model has been revised

by many school systems towards a consultative approach in which the resource teacher works more closely with the regular classroom teacher(s) toward providing an individual program plan for special needs students within the LRE.

Many educators advocate the non-categorical resource model in which students are provided programs based on their performance and individual characteristics and needs rather than on the basis of a categorical definition of a particular handicap which they may have. Some educators, however, are hesitant to give up categorically based programming as often funding for special education is closely tied to categorization of special needs students.

Other factors which have an impact on the service delivery model utilized by a particular system are attitudes of parents and the public as well as those of the teachers and administrators involved. The size and location of a school district and the socio-economic and political issues over-riding the educational system are also factors which impact the special education service delivery system.

Despite the effects of the above factors, the major assertion posed in the literature appears to be that a cooperative effort is required, amongst regular and special educators, as well as amongst the public, parents, and the school system. Lathen (1983) asserts that the special education service delivery system should emphasize discovery of conditions and circumstances under which student success is achieved and precision planning should be based on knowledge of a student's past performance, not on a particular handicapping condition. Indeed, it stands to reason that in order for such planning to occur, a

cooperative effort between all parties involved would be crucial if not essential.

Which children are provided special education and the type of services they receive are factors which are major in terms of how much is spent on special education. The question of "how much does an adequate program cost?", is one which arises in the literature related to finance and special education. It is widely recognized that special education does cost a good deal more than regular education. Estimates of the ratio of costs varies from twice as much to four times as much for special education as for regular education.

It is imperative that in order for funding to be distributed equitably for a particular group of children, some type of eligibility criteria and definition needs to be established. How broad or specific these criteria and definitions are becomes the issue. Again, the categorical versus non-categorical approach is a major determinant. Although some type of classification seems necessary, definitions can subvert the delivery of special services for children in need (Moore, 1982). Hartman (1980) asserts that the particular funding mechanisms utilized should not exert a dominant influence over the choice of educational programs selected for children.

The choice of formula utilized for allocating funds for special education becomes important for the incentives and disincentives it may create for school districts or schools in providing adequate, appropriate programs and services for handicapped children (Hartman, 1980). Three general types of formulae are discussed in the literature -resource-based, child-based, and cost-based. Each has a differing

effect on the need for classification, on incentives for identifying children, as well as on the type of program a particular child may be placed in. Parrish and Chambers (1982) claim that the most common funding approaches are "classification" or "foundation" based. This claim implies that typically school districts are provided a foundation grant which guarantees a prescribed minimum for all students. Further to the foundation grant, funds are provided on a classification basis for pupils designated as eligible to receive supplemental services.

In the United States, the two most common funding methods used by the states, as suggested by Gearhart and Wright (1979), are the per-unit or per-class reimbursement method and the per-pupil method. The federal funding mechanism utilized for special education in the States is a block fund. This mechanism was implemented in 1981 and was based on the conviction that local education agencies should be given control and flexibility in the use of funds (Hearn, 1982). However, concerns were expressed with respect to this "new system." For example, small school systems especially were concerned that they would have difficulty providing for high-cost pupils. A section of the act governing this funding initiative was designated to insure that state educational agencies adjust their formulae for distribution to provide higher per pupil allocations to local educational agencies that have the greatest number or percentage of children whose education imposes a higher than average cost per child (Hearn, 1982).

A subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations was assigned the task of reviewing the effects of the federal block fund. Some of the conclusions reached were related to a concern regarding

equitable allocation of funds to districts. A recommendation was made therefore that a regulation be devised to standardize the definition of "equitable allocation." Other recommendations that were made were: that regulations be adopted to assure that funds are spent on students for whom they are allocated; and that more technical assistance be provided to state and local educational agencies.

In Canada, the methods utilized for funding distribution across the provinces varies considerably. A number of provinces still base their allocations largely on categorization. However, the types of categories utilized vary in terms of their breadth. Many provinces provide a "foundation" grant as well as specific grants based on categorizations. Kelly (1983) found that the factors which appear to have had the greatest impact on special education in Canada are: mainstreaming and integration; the trend toward de-institutionalization; the broadening range of programs (addition of gifted and multi-handicapped); regulatory requirements; and enhanced identification methods.

In Alberta, the government has recently implemented a new Management and Finance Plan designed to deliver educational services to students in the province in a more effective, efficient manner. For special education, a block fund similar to that used in the United States, has been adopted as a means for distributing funds more efficiently. As was the case in the U.S., such a method was adopted in Alberta to provide increased autonomy and flexibility in the use of funds to the local education agencies. Concerns which were expressed by local educators as well as the public were also similar to those

which arose in the U.S. In particular, the question of equitable allocation has been commonly expressed. In Alberta, the loss of the program unit grant for the severely, profoundly or multiply handicapped has created a significantly widespread expression of concern. The Alberta government is currently in the process of designing a study which it hopes will address this concern as well as others which have been expressed related to the MFP and block funding for special education.

Another major issue which affects service delivery and funding mechanisms for special education is the size and location of districts. In rural areas many special needs children have been unidentified and underserved in the past; and, many would claim that these students continue to be underserved. The higher costs of transportation, the difficulties maintaining specialized staff, and the smaller numbers of students are problems inherent in providing adequate special education programs in rural areas. The major challenge, as identified by Wallace (1979) and others, is the problem of serving a small number of handicapped children who are often scattered geographically.

The typical practice in rural areas has been to send these students to larger centers for special programming. Initiatives such as cooperative arrangements have served, in some instances, to provide a more suitable alternative. However, the cooperatives as well often have difficulties attaining and keeping personnel. Other difficulties such as high transportation costs and conflicts over priorities and programs amongst administrators, often inhibit successful delivery of services in cooperatives.

The non-categorical resource model is another method which has been adopted in rural areas with varying degrees of success. The literature implies that the crucial factor effecting success of such programs appears to be the extent of interaction and cooperation between regular and special educators.

Other methods for delivering special services in rural areas are inservice training packages for staff, and consultative assistance through itinerant teachers. Weatherman (1983) reports that these methods can be effective in upgrading teacher skills in remote areas.

Finally, one of the most significant factors impacting on the provision of special programs and services in rural areas is the cost factor. The two major problems regarding finance in rural areas have been identified as the uneven geographic distribution of property and income wealth, and the sparsity of population.

In Alberta, one of the significant characteristics of its school population which has an impact on the effectiveness of service delivery is the isolated nature of its population. A large portion of Alberta schools and school systems are rural-based. In addition, many of these rural-based systems have small enrollments. With respect to numbers of special education students, and the low-incidence handicapped population in particular, it is not difficult to surmise the effects size and location have on the effectiveness of funding distribution as well as service delivery. Indeed, these factors must be given careful consideration in the management and finance of education at both the provincial and local levels.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study originally was designed and set up to determine the impact of the Management and Finance Plan on the delivery of services to students who were funded through a Program Unit Grant in the 1983-84 school year. Such a study would have examined qualitative and quantitative data collected through questionnaire, interview, and related documents (budget forms, IEPs, etc.) for the purpose of determining the extent of change, if any, in these students' programs and services in the 1984-85 school year. (See Appendix A for a description of this proposed study.)

A stratified sample of sixteen school districts in Zones two and three in Alberta were selected to participate in this study. Districts were first categorized according to size (small, average, large), demographic status (urban, rural, suburban), and funding status (windfalled, grandfathered). Then districts were randomly selected from the various categories ensuring appropriate representation to the maximum extent possible. The superintendent from each selected district was contacted through a letter (see Appendix B) giving information on the intent of the study, and asked for consent for participation in the study of relevant individuals in their school system.

A pilot study, with two unselected jurisdictions, was conducted in March of 1985. The results of this pilot prompted an adjustment in the study's focus. Although it was felt that the original questions were educationally significant, they were somewhat premature as the impact of MFP likely would not be evident for at least two years after its implementation. The study was then revised and superintendents previously contacted were notified about the change (see Appendix C). In addition, superintendents of the remaining jurisdictions were contacted to inform them of the study and ask for their participation in the second phase of the revised study, a telephone survey (see Appendix D).

The revised study which will be discussed and examined in this paper was designed to examine system and school administrators' perceptions of the Management and Finance Plan and block funding with respect to future directions in special education service delivery, and consequent changes in the level and quality of services provided to special education students formerly served under Program Unit Grants. Subjects selected for the original study were maintained for phase one of the revised study. This phase of the study typically involved interviewing superintendents, special education administrators and principals from each of the selected districts. Each participant also completed a questionnaire. Phase two of the study involved a telephone survey with administrators from fifteen of the remaining jurisdictions in zones two and three. (See Appendix E for a summary description of the revised study.)

Selection Procedure

Because the researcher worked out of the Edmonton Regional Office (ERO) of Alberta Education as well as with the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta, those school districts within the jurisdiction of the ERO were selected for the study. A total of 52 districts in zones two and three were categorized according to their funding status: grandfathered, windfalled, or receiving "no significant change" in funds (see Appendix F). A grandfathered district is defined for the purposes of this study as one in which the formula fund for special education in 1984-85, at $135 per resident pupil, was less than that which it received in 1983-84. These districts were grandfathered to ensure that a level of funding comparable to that received in 1983-84 was provided in 1984-85. A windfalled district is one in which the provincial funds received for special education in 1984-85 through the formula for the block fund ($135 per resident pupil) was significantly greater than that it received in 1983-84. A district with "no significant change" was one in which no increase or decrease in funding occurred from 1983-84 to 1984-85 because of the implementation of block funding and the formula. A change in funding was considered significant if the figure from the formula was ten percent greater or less than the amount of funding received in 1983-84.

Districts were also classified according to their size: small, average, or large. For the purposes of this study, a small jurisdiction is defined as one that has less than 1,000 resident

pupils. An average district is one that has from 1,000 to 6,000 resident pupils. A large district has more than 6,000 pupils.

Finally, districts were classified according to their status on one demographic variable: urban, suburban, or rural. For the purposes of this study, an urban district is one in which the central office is located in a center having a population greater than 500,000, a suburban district is one in which the central office is located in a center within commuting distance of an urban center, and a rural district is one in which the central office is located in a center which is not within commuting distance of an urban center.

The following table provides figures representing the number of districts in zones two and three in each of the major categories:

TABLE 3.1

Size	Number	Percentage
Small	24	46
Average	24	46
Large	4	8
Demographic Status		
Rural	39	75
Urban	2	4
Suburban	11	21
Funding Status		
Grandfathered	14	26
Windfalled	26	50
No Significant Change	12	24

Table 3.2 contains figures which represent the number and percentage of districts representing each of the 27 individual categories:

TABLE 3.2

Category	Number	Percentage
Windfalled		
Small Rural	12	23
Small Urban	0	0
Small Suburban	3	6
Average Rural	8	15
Average Urban	0	0
Average Suburban	1	2
Large Rural	0	0
Large Urban	0	0
Large Suburban	2	4
Grandfathered		
Small Rural	6	12
Small Urban	0	0
Small Suburban	1	2
Average Rural	5	10
Average Urban	0	0
Average Suburban	1	2
Large Rural	0	0
Large Urban	1	2
Large Suburban	0	0
No Significant Change		
Small Rural	3	6
Small Urban	0	0
Small Suburban	0	0
Average Rural	5	10
Average Urban	0	0
Average Suburban	3	6
Large Rural	0	0
Large Urban	0	0
Large Suburban	1	2

On the basis of the above figures, a sample of districts was

randomly selected from each of the grandfathered and windfalled categories, with appropriate representation to the maximum extent possible. The selection was made from a total of 40 districts, as those districts which received no significant change were excluded. Table 3.3 provides figures representing the number and percentage of districts in each of the 18 remaining categories and the number and percentage of districts selected for participation in phase one of the study.

TABLE 3.3

Category	Selected Sample		Total Sample	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Windfalled				
Small Rural	4	25	12	30
Average Rural	3	19	8	20
Small Suburban	0	0	3	7
Average Suburban	1	6	1	3
Large Suburban	1	6	2	5
Grandfathered				
Small Rural	2	13	6	15
Small Suburban	1	6	1	3
Average rural	2	13	5	12
Average Suburban	1	6	1	3
Large Urban	1	6	1	3
TOTAL:	16	100	40	100

Table 3.4 provides figures which represent the actual numbers and percentages of districts representing the three sets of major categories, as well as those figures for the numbers and percentages which are statistically appropriate.

TABLE 3.4

Categories	Actual		Statistical Representation	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Windfalled	9	56	10	65
Grandfathered	7	44	6	35
Small	7	44	9	55
Average	7	44	6	38
Large	2	12	1	7
Rural	11	69	12	78
Urban	1	6	1	3
Suburban	4	25	3	20

Instruments

Two major instruments were developed for the purposes of this study. First, a questionnaire (see Appendix G) was developed which was to be completed by the superintendents, special education administrators and principals involved in phase one of the study. This questionnaire, using a Likert scale, was designed to supplement data collected through interviews with the same participants. The questionnaire has two major sections, one which focuses on the goals of MFP, and one which refers specifically to block funding.

The second instrument is the interview form (see Appendix H). Questions were developed which focussed on obtaining participants' perceptions of the impact MFP and block funding was having and will have in the future on special educational services. In addition, participants were asked to describe their current special education

service delivery model, to provide their opinion on the effectiveness of the block fund, and to offer their suggestions of how funding for special education should be distributed. A shortened interview form to be used in phase two, the telephone survey, was developed from the original interview form.

The development of the instruments described above involved several steps. Initially, informal discussions with education consultants and officials of Alberta Education served to provide information on questions which would be feasible and elicit information useful and relevant to interested parties. In addition, the pilot study which was conducted with six participants from two jurisdictions gave the examiner some insight into the types of questions which would be most practical and beneficial at that stage of the implementation of MFP. Following completion of the first draft of the instruments, further checks were made on the face and content validity of the instruments by distributing the instruments for review to the Director of the Planning and Research Department of Alberta Education. The Director, as well as at least three other members of the managerial staff in this department, reviewed the instruments and provided feedback on the content which was considered as revisions were made. In addition, the instruments were reviewed by the Director of the Special Education Branch, the Director of the Edmonton Regional Office, and the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Program Development Division. In meetings with these individuals, the researcher received further input on the content of the instruments and further revisions were made accordingly.

The instruments appeared to be reliable as respondents provided information in which the researcher found commonalities, patterns and trends, and thus, the data were able to be classified. For the purposes of this study, the instruments are considered to be reliable and valid to the extent of providing information which is relevant to the research questions.

Data Collection

Interviews were held with 44 participants, including superintendents, special education administrators and principals. Interviews with system level administrators were typically conducted at the school district's central office. Interviews with principals were held in their schools. All interviews took place within a five week period, in May and June of 1985. Following each interview, a questionnaire was left with each participant, instruction was provided, and they were requested to return the questionnaire via mail to the researcher using stamped, addressed envelopes which were provided. Thirty-eight questionnaires were returned, a return rate of 86 percent.

All interviews were recorded, with the permission of the participants, who were informed that the information provided would remain confidential in that their names and those of their districts would not be used in the study. All participants were most cooperative. They appeared to feel comfortable with the interview procedure, and, in the researcher's opinion, were direct and frank, providing information openly and honestly. In addition to the taping,

the researcher took notes at the interviews.

Following the interviews the researcher reviewed the recordings and where necessary added information to the written notes. In addition, this process was repeated, for a random selection of the interviews, by a professor with the Department of Educational Psychology (Special Education) who had an interest in the study. These reviews served to confirm that information collected in the interviews was recorded and interpreted accurately.

The telephone survey was conducted out of the Edmonton Regional Office. Calls were made over a five week period also, in May and June of 1985. Again, participants were assured of confidentiality and the researcher believes that responses were given openly and honestly. Responses were recorded manually on a telephone survey form (see Appendix I).

Data Analysis

Data collected through interviews were classified and subsequently summarized. Responses to some questions were classified according to pre-determined categories which were shared with the participants in the interviews. For example, questions one and two ask what changes have taken place as a result of MFP and block funding. Participants were provided with a list of categories with which their responses to these questions were to be classified (see Appendix J).

Responses were also classified in two general categories, grandfathered and windfalled. Following each response the researcher

has further indicated what district type the participant belongs to, and whether the participant was a superintendent, a special education administrator, or a principal. Tables containing summarized responses from the interviews can be found in Appendix K.

Although districts were categorized according to size and demographic status, as well, interview data were not grouped on this basis. Because of the large number of categories that this would have involved, the interview data were more easily classified according to funding status. Also, this classification is most relevant to the research questions.

Data collected through the telephone survey were analyzed and tabulated through the same process as was used for interview data. (See Appendix L for a summary of responses).

Analysis and classification of both the interview and the telephone survey data was conducted by a trained research assistant. The analysis was then reviewed and summarized by the researcher, and some minor alterations in the classifications were made. Finally, the analysis was reviewed on a random basis by the professor from the Educational Psychology Department who had previously been involved in reviewing the recordings from interviews.

Questionnaire data were analyzed by computer. A cross-tabulation run was conducted. For each question this provided frequency counts and percentages for each response category (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). The cross-tabulation run was conducted for all sets of subject categorizations previously discussed. The data were then tabulated according to responses received from

respondents in grandfathered versus windfalled districts; large versus average versus small districts; and rural versus urban districts. For purposes of data analysis the categories suburban and urban were collapsed into one category, urban. See Appendix M for tables containing questionnaire data.

Limitations and Delimitations

The subjects selected for the study consist of school jurisdictions in zones two and three of the province. The Edmonton Regional Office of Alberta Education, which is one of five regional offices in the province, is responsible for acting as liaison with these jurisdictions in the implementation of MFP and for providing consultative services in the areas of management, administration, and specialty areas (e.g. special education, counselling, mathematics, language arts, etc.). The location of the districts involved in the study (zones two and three) presents a limitation on the generalizability of the results. As well, the working relationship between the regional office management and staff, and administrators in school districts would likely affect to a large extent school system administrators' perceptions and attitudes toward Alberta Education and subsequently toward the Management and Finance Plan. The fact that the districts involved in the study have had contact with only the Edmonton Regional Office therefore presents as a further although somewhat minor limitation, as these administrators' perceptions and attitudes related to Alberta Education would be based primarily on this select

component of the organization.

A further limitation which presents itself in the generalizability of the data, is related to the backgrounds of the participants. The administrators interviewed and surveyed come from a somewhat diverse range of backgrounds relative to special education, as well as to general administration. In addition, administrators' attitudes toward special needs student, and the feasibility of spending sometimes magnificent sums of money ~~on~~ one student relative to that spent on "normal" children, is another factor for which no control was incorporated.

The instruments designed for the purposes of the study were not standardized and no formal checks were conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments. However, due to the nature of the study, standardized instruments were not available, and current, related instruments had to be designed. Therefore, the fact that the instruments had not been used before presents itself as a limitation.

As mentioned previously, the researcher was involved in the study from two focal points, as a student of the Educational Psychology Department of the University of Alberta and as an employee of Alberta Education. Although the former does not present a problem relative to the data collected, the latter position may raise some questions amongst stakeholders. One might question how this affected participants' attitudes toward the researcher and subsequently the directness and openness of their answers. However, in the researcher's best estimation, rapport was well established with participants, and

the reseacher's interview skills were effective in assuring participants that confidentiality would be maintained. Therefore, this limitation is not one which the researcher feels is significant.

A final limitation of the study lies with the interpretation of results and therefore the strength of subsequent conclusions. A statistical procedure for random samples was not utilized, and therefore the researcher was not able to determine the statistical significance of the results. Hence, conclusions which are made must be considered tentative and hypothetical.

CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The following interpretation of the data collected is based on an analysis which focussed primarily on the differentiation between how administrators from grandfathered districts responded as compared to those from windfalled districts. This focus was taken as the block fund which was implemented was expected to impact those districts which received a windfall of money differently from how it would impact those districts which had to be grandfathered to ensure that they would receive funding at a level commensurate with that received the year prior to the implementation of MFP.

In the following chapter differences in responses are highlighted and discussed. Although differences discussed are not known to be statistically significant, the researcher discusses the differences in which percentages of responses differ by roughly 20 percent or greater.

Interviews

A summary of responses to the interview questions can be found in Appendix L. The first major question asked of participants in Phase one of the study was "In the 1984-85 school year, have services to special education students in this school system (or school) changed as

a result of MFP and block funding? If yes .... describe these changes." These results suggest that generally, the majority of adminstrators responded negatively to this question. Also, those from windfalled districts were more likely to indicate that changes had taken place in their school system or school as a result of MFP than were administrators from grandfathered districts. See Table 4.1 below.

TABLE 4.1

Responses to question # 1a, "In the 1984-85 school year, have services to special education students ... changed?"

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Yes	40% (18)	56% (13)	24% (5)
No	60% (26)	44% (10)	76% (16)

When asked if the changes have been beneficial to special education students overall, of the participants from windfalled districts 23% (8) responded yes, 13% (3) responded no, and the remainder did not respond (64%). Very few participants from grandfathered districts responded to this question.

When asked what changes had been made in 1984-85 as a result of MFP and block funding, participants responded in terms of 14 pre-determined categories. In terms of administration, the changes which were discussed were:

* there is an increase in central office time related to special education;

* there is a tendency to keep students at the local level rather than send them out-of-district;

* there is an increase in flexibility for staff allocations.

A number of participants from grandfathered districts indicated that changes were being made in the district's service delivery system for special education or in the system utilized for distributing funds. No participants from windfalled districts indicated that such changes were being made.

In terms of programs and staffing, although a number of participants from windfalled districts indicated they had hired additional staff in the special education area or added new programs, none of the participants from grandfathered districts indicated this. Participants in windfalled districts were also much more likely to indicate that integration had increased and that less aide time was available for students, than were participants in grandfathered districts.

Participants from windfalled districts also indicated that an increase in parent involvement, especially through the IEP process, and an increase in teacher inservice in the special education area had occurred.

In summary, the responses which were most prevalent in terms of changes made in 1984-85 in windfalled districts were: increased inservice for teachers; increased integration; and increased parent involvement. In grandfathered districts the most prevalent responses were related to changes in service delivery and funding distribution.

Interviewees were than asked if "Specifically, in the 1984-85

school year, have services to former PUG recipients in this school system (school) changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding?...If yes, describe these changes." Of the 44 participants, the majority responded no. Participants from grandfathered and windfalled districts responded similarly to this question. See Table 4.2 below.

TABLE 4.2

Responses to question #1b, "...in the 1984-85 school year, have services to former PUG recipients ... changed?"

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Yes	16% (7)	17% (4)	14% (3)
No	75% (33)	66% (15)	86% (18)
Uncertain	9% (4)	17% (4)	0% (0)

When asked to describe the changes which have occurred in services to former PUG recipients, the response which was most common from participants in windfalled districts suggested that aide time available to PUG students had decreased. In grandfathered districts, the most common responses were related to expressed concerns about the loss of PUGs for ECS students. Finally, in both types of districts, a number of responses suggested that services to PUG students had been maintained.

The second major question asked interviewees "Do you expect services to special education students in this school system (school)

to change in 1985-86, as a result of MFP and block funding?...Describe the changes which will or may occur." Of the 44 respondents, the majority responded no, and there was little difference between responses of participants from grandfathered and windfalled districts. See Table 4.3 below.

TABLE 4.3

Responses to question #2a, "Do you expect services to special education students ... to change in 1985-86?"

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Yes	36% (16)	39% (9)	33% (7)
No	64% (28)	61% (14)	67% (14)

When asked if they expected the changes to be beneficial to special education students overall,25% (11) participants responded yes, 16% (7) responded no, and 59% (26) made no comment.

A change which was discussed in the area of administration by both types of districts was that further coordination of services was a result of the development of policies, guidelines and procedures. The most prevalent responses from participants of grandfathered districts indicated that there would be a need to review funding allowances for and services to special education students; that a move toward a classroom consultative model would be initiated; and that administration time would be cut back.

With respect to staff deployment and programming, the most

frequent responses, from participants in grandfathered districts, indicated that less aide time would be available to special education students and teaching positions would be lost. The most frequent responses from participants of windfalled districts indicated that special education teachers will be, in part, deployed into regular programs as a result of increased integration; full-time counselling positions will be added; that some programs will be lost; and the numbers of students in programs will increase.

With respect to integration and frequency of contact special education students have with professionals, a number of windfalled districts responded that integration would be increased, whereas participants from grandfathered districts did not tend to respond this way. The opposite was true regarding frequency of contact; participants from grandfathered districts were more likely to respond that there would be fewer professionals to serve fewer people.

Other responses, from both types of districts, indicated that staff would be added to provide special services such as speech therapy; that inservice would be increased in the special education area; that screening and assessment procedures would be reviewed as it will be necessary to look more closely at the type of students being put in special programs and prioritize more; and that there would be an increase in monitoring and evaluation as a result of MFP. A number of respondents from grandfathered jurisdictions indicated that the budget for special materials would be cut back.

In summary, the most frequent responses in terms of changes to be made in 1985-86 were, for grandfathered districts: further

coordination of services through development of policies, guidelines and procedures; review of special education services and funding allocations; loss of teaching positions and aide time; increase in inservice; and cut backs in budget for special materials. The most frequent responses from participants of windfalled districts were: increase in numbers of students in special programs; increase in integration; and increase in inservicing.

The second part of question two asked participants "Specifically, do you expect services to former PUG recipients (or children with comparable handicaps) in this school system (school) to change in 1985-86, as a result of MFP? ...Describe the changes." Of the 44 participants, the majority said no. See Table 4.4 below.

TABLE 4.4

Responses to question #2b, "... do you expect services to former PUG recipients ... to change in 1985-86?"

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Yes	14% (6)	13% (3)	14% (3)
No	72% (32)	65% (15)	81% (17)
Uncertain	14% (6)	22% (5)	5% (1)

In terms of changes expected, for grandfathered districts the response with the greatest frequency indicated a loss of aides and aide-time. The highest frequency response from both district types indicated that many districts expected to maintain services during the

1985-86 school year, but that there would be pressure to do less and less in the future as funds got tighter.

The most frequent comments and/or questions with respect to expected changes for the 1985-86 school year, as a result of MFP and block funding were: we expect to maintain services; what does a district do when a high-cost low-incident pupil moves in. In addition, a number of participants from grandfathered districts expressed concern about the loss of PUGs for early childhood students.

The third question asked participants to describe briefly the special education service delivery model which the system or school implemented; how the model has changed in 1984-85; what changes will be made in 1985-86 or in future years to the model; and to what extent these changes can be attributed to MFP? The most common special education service delivery models utilized by school districts involved in the study appear to be the cascade model with the least restrictive environment approach and integration to the maximum extent possible; and a pull-out resource room program for mild to moderately handicapped children, and segregated classes for the moderately to severely handicapped, with some integration.

Types of changes made to the models in 1984-85 varied considerably, and were not reported frequently. However, respondents from windfalled districts tended to indicate that services or programs were being added, whereas grandfathered districts' participants suggested that there would be staff cut backs and a loss of programs or services. With respect to anticipated changes for 1985-86, for grandfathered districts the most frequent response again was that

further reductions were expected.

Participants were asked to give their opinions of the decision to include the PUGs in the block fund for special education. The most frequent response to this question, from both district types, indicated that administrators felt that the inclusion of the PUG in the block grant was not a good idea, that separate funding should be maintained, and that the money should go where the student goes. In addition, a number of participants indicated that funds spent on PUG students may now be insufficient because the funding distribution at the discretion of the district. These participants felt that these students would now receive a lesser quality of service.

A frequent response, especially from participants in grandfathered districts, indicated that participants felt that the decision to include PUGs in the block grant was a mistake as it was done on the incorrect assumption that these children are evenly distributed across districts.

One of the most frequent responses from participants in windfalled districts was that moving to block funding was positive as there will be less abuse of the system now.

Participants were then asked how funding for special education should be distributed. They were given four choices: i) block funding; ii) block funding with PUGs for the severely and profoundly handicapped; iii) on a resource or service basis (system used prior to MFP); iv) other. The majority of the respondents chose block funding with PUGs for the severely and profoundly handicapped. See Table 4.5 below.

TABLE 4.5

Responses to question #4b, "... how should funding for special education be distributed?"

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
block funding	11% (5)	9% (2)	13% (3)
block funding with the PUG	68% (30)	86% (20)	48% (10)
resource or service basis	9% (4)	0% (0)	19% (4)
other	5% (2)	0% (0)	10% (2)
uncertain	7% (3)	5% (1)	10% (2)

The most frequent comment with respect to this question was that there should be earmarked funds for some particular types of handicapped children (high-cost students). Thirty-four percent (15) of all participants made this type of a comment.

Sixty-eight percent (30) of all participants chose "block funding with a program unit grant for the severely and profoundly handicapped." It is interesting to note however that where 87% (20) of the participants from windfalled districts made this choice, only 48% (10) of the participants from grandfathered districts chose this approach.

Other frequent comments made by participants from windfalled districts were: if you budget properly with block funding you have no problems, except with the severely handicapped; and, there is more flexibility now with block funding.

Frequent comments made by participants of grandfathered districts were: the last system involved a lot of red tape - if they go back to

PUGs they should cut the red tape and base it on a simple report of conditions and a need for special help; there needs to be a system where jurisdictions are not penalized for providing a high level of special education services; and, smaller jurisdictions should be given special consideration.

When asked on what basis this funding should be provided, resident pupil, eligible pupil, or other, 34% (15) of participants chose resident pupil, 36% (16) chose eligible pupil, 10% (4) chose other, and 20% (9) were uncertain. It is interesting to note however that whereas 52% (12) of the participants from windfalled jurisdictions chose the resident pupil basis, only 14% (3) of the participants from grandfathered districts made this choice. See Table 4.6 below. The most frequent responses from particiapnts of windfalled districts were: the resident pupil system works quite well; and, whoever has the child should pick up the funding. The most frequent response from respondents of grandfathered districts was: fund on an eligible pupil basis but increase the per-student allotment.

TABLE 4.6

Responses to question #4c, "On what basis should this funding be provided?"

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Resident pupil	34% (15)	52% (12	14% (3)
Eligible pupil	36% (16)	22% (5)	62% (11)
Other	10% (4)	0% (0)	19% (4)
Uncertain	20% (9)	26% (6)	13% (3)

In question five, the participants were asked what they consider to be the most positive effect of the MFP on special education in Alberta, and of block funding. With respect to MFP, the most frequent responses, made by participants of grandfathered districts were: school districts were forced to place some priorities on their special education programs; MFP recognizes that the management group at the local level is best able to meet the needs of special education pupils; and, planning has improved as we now know what we can count on. The most frequent responses from participants of windfalled districts were: there is now more freedom to meet the needs of the students; MFP provides more flexibility at the local level; local autonomy; accountability; and decentralization.

With respect to the most positive effects of block funding, the most frequent response, by participants from both district-types, was that districts now have the freedom to allocate dollars where they wish.

Other responses were: block funding encourages districts to look at alternate service delivery models; it allows the development of programs that fit into the context of a district's philosophy; there is less paper work; and, it has made funds available to every district.

Participants were then asked to comment on what other positive effects they saw resulting from MFP and block funding. The most frequent responses, from grandfathered districts, were: it has made districts look at how to best meet students needs; it has increased awareness of the financial implications of special education at both the local and provincial levels. Other responses from grandfathered

districts were: it should lead to more effective funding; giving decisions to employees gains more responsible people; and, it has made districts think about long term planning, monitoring and evaluation of services at the local level.

The most frequent responses from windfalled districts were: we have the flexibility to be innovative and creative; it has recognized the gifted; there is more accountability. Other responses were: now we can provide services quicker because there's less red tape; it allows districts to deal with specific needs; there is an increase in awareness on the part of the public.

The last interview question asked participants what concerns they had about MFP and block funding as they relate to the delivery of special education services to students in Alberta. The most frequent response to this question was from grandfathered districts: there may be a serious detrimental effect on the educational services to special education students. In fact, 52% (11) of the participants from grandfathered districts expressed this concern. Other frequent responses from grandfathered districts were: the incidence of handicapping conditions may be disproportionate to the funding; politics may infringe on the needs of students; we're concerned about PUGs being attached to block funding.

The most frequent concern expressed by windfalled districts was: there is not enough money for service - programs will have to be cut. Other frequent responses were: parents are demanding more than we can offer; block funding doesn't make adequate provision for the possibility of small districts being suddenly saddled with a number of

high-cost students; MFP could be an invitation to offer the worst possible service.

Telephone Survey

The telephone survey, which was conducted with 15 districts not involved in phase one of the study, focussed on the first two questions asked of interviewees in phase one. These two questions asked participants if there had been changes in 1984-85 or would be changes in 1985-86 to services for special education students and former PUG recipients. Participants were then asked to describe the changes.

Generally, participants in the telephone survey responded in the same way as the interviewees. The responses tend to support the generalizability of the results from phase one of the study.

Some of the more frequent comments made by participants were as follows:

* Block funding is good. It works for most special education students, but we would like to see PUGs back for the severely or multiply handicapped.

* We like the flexibility and the accountability which MFP has provided.

* MFP has forced us to look at our programs and expenditures in the special education area and consider alternate methods.

* Tuition fees are a concern.

* The high-cost low-incidence problems are not evenly distributed. Block funding is not considering this.

A summary of responses from the telephone survey can be found in Appendix D.

Questionnaire

The first question on the questionnaire was as follows: The Management and Finance Plan (MFP) was developed to improve the quality of education to students in Alberta. Fulfillment of the following goals of MFP will facilitate improvement in the quality of education provided to special education students:

a) Improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.

b) Increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.

c) Increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.

d) Increase in local responsibility, autonomy flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.

e) Increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.

f) Increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.

g) i) Increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.

ii) Increased effectiveness in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education,

iii) Increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.

h) Enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta

Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.

Overall, the majority of the questionnaire participants agreed that fulfillment of the above objectives would facilitate improvement. However, some exceptions to this finding warrant discussion here.

Item 1e, "increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate", received a more even distribution of responses. Participants from grandfathered districts were less inclined to agree than were those from windfalled districts. For item 1g (iii), "increased focus in providing benefits directly to students", the largest number of participants agreed. However, participants from grandfathered districts were less inclined to agree than were those from windfalled districts. On item 1h, "enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results", the largest number of participants were neutral. See Table 4.7 below.

Further exceptions are notable when one compares responses from participants in rural districts to those from participants in urban districts. For item 1g (i), "increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education", the majority of participants from urban districts agreed. This pattern of response was also noted for items 1g (ii). On item 1h "enhanced partnership...", participants from urban districts were much more inclined to agree than were those from rural districts. See Table 4.8 below. For all items but two of question 1, a higher percentage of participants from urban districts than from rural districts chose the agree category.

TABLE 4.7

Responses to questionnaire item #1c, "... increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	32% (12)	48% (9)	16% (3)
Neutral	34% (13)	26% (5)	42% (8)
Disagree	34% (13)	26% (5)	42% (8)

Item #1g (iii), "... increased focus in providing benefits directly to students ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	48% (18)	61% (11)	37% (7)
Neutral	22% (8)	11% (2)	32% (6)
Disagree	30% (11)	28% (5)	31% (6)

Item #1h, "... enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	31% (11)	28% (5)	35% (6)
Neutral	46% (16)	56% (10)	35% (6)
Disagree	23% (8)	16% (3)	30% (5)

TABLE 4.8

Responses to questionnaire item #1g (i), "... increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds ..."

Responses	Total	Rural	Urban
Agree	48% (18)	36% (8)	62% (10)
Neutral	34% (13)	41% (9)	25% (4)
Disagree	18% (7)	23% (5)	13% (2)

Item #1g (ii), "... increased effectiveness ..."

Responses	Total	Rural	Urban
Agree	50% (19)	40% (9)	63% (10)
Neutral	34% (13)	36% (8)	31% (5)
Disagree	16% (6)	24% (5)	6% (1)

Item #1h, "... enhanced partnership ..."

Responses	Total	Rural	Urban
Agree	31% (11)	32% (7)	31% (4)
Neutral	46% (16)	59% (13)	23% (3)
Disagree	23% (8)	9% (2)	46% (6)

Although this factor was not the major focus of the study, it is interesting to note that some differences are also evident among the responses given by participants in small, average and large districts. Generally, for items in question 1, participants from large districts

chose the agree category more often than did participants from small or average districts. On items 1a "improved information on the results of educational programming available ...", 1b "increased responsiveness by the educational system...", and 1h "enhanced partnership among organizations..." a higher percentage of participants from small and large districts chose the agree category than from average-sized districts. On item 1d, "increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility and discretion over the use of provincial funds...", a higher percentage of participants from large and average districts chose agree than from small districts. This pattern of response was also noted for items g (i), "increased efficiency in the use of..." and g (ii), "increased effectiveness in the use of...".

The second major question was: "1984-85 has been a year of transition for the implementation of MFP. Progress has been made in 1984-85 toward the fulfillment of the following goals of MFP as they relate to the delivery of services to special education students": (goals listed here as in number 1). Participants, in general, showed less agreement with this statement than they did with question 1.

On item 2b, "increased responsiveness by the educational system...", the majority of the participants agreed. On item 2c, "increased direction to school systems..." and item 2d "increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility...", the majority of participants agreed. Generally, a higher percentage of participants selected the "agree" category on the above three items than on other items in question two. Essentially, responses to the other items were more equally distributed across the three choices (agree, disagree,

neutral). See Table 4.9 below.

TABLE 4.9

Responses to questionnaire item #2b, "... increased responsiveness by the educational system ..."

Responses	Total
Agree	62% (23)
Neutral	11% (4)
Disagree	27% (10)

Item #2c, "... increased direction to school systems ..."

Responses	Total
Agree	63% (24)
Neutral	21% (8)
Disagree	16% (6)

Item #2d, "... increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility ..."

Responses	Total
Agree	84% (32)
Neutral	3% (1)
Disagree	13% (5)

Differences in responses can be noted between participants from grandfathered districts and those from windfalled districts. The majority of participants agreed to item 2b, "increased responsiveness by the educational system ...." However, participants from windfalled districts were more inclined to agree than were those from grandfathered districts. See Table 4.10 below.

TABLE 4.10

Responses to questionnaire item #2b, "...increased responsiveness by the educational system ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	62% (23)	72% (13)	53% (10)
Neutral	11% (4)	17% (3)	5% (1)
Disagree	27% (10)	11% (2)	42% (8)

On item 2c, "increased direction..." and 2f, "increased accountability...", a higher percentage of participants from grandfathered districts disagreed than did those from windfalled districts. See Table 4.11 below.

Differences in responses can also be noted between participants from urban districts and those from rural districts. On items 2f, 2g (i), and 2g (ii), a higher percentage of participants from urban districts chose the agree category than did those from rural districts.

Participants from large districts responded differently on some items in question 2 than did those from small and large districts. On

TABLE 4.11

Responses to questionnaire item #2c, "... increased direction ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	63% (24)	58% (11)	68% (13)
Neutral	21% (8)	37% (7)	5% (1)
Disagree	16% (6)	5% (1)	26% (5)

Item #2f, "... increased accountability ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	54% (20)	58% (11)	47% (9)
Neutral	31% (12)	37% (7)	26% (5)
Disagree	15% (6)	5% (1)	27% (5)

items 2g (i), 2g (ii), and 2g (iii), a higher percentage of participants from large districts chose the agree category than did those from small or average districts. On item 2c, a lower percentage of participants from large districts chose "agree" than did those from small or average districts.

Question three of the questionnaire was as follows: "Overall, the new Management and Finance Plan is a positive educational initiative." The majority of participants agreed to this statement. It is interesting to note that although 17% (3) of the participants from grandfathered districts disagreed with this statement, 0% of those from the windfalled districts disagreed. Also, nearly twice as many

participants from rural districts agreed with this item as compared to those from urban districts. Further differences can be found when considering the size factor. Participants from large and small districts were more inclined to agree than were those from average districts. See Table 4.12 below for a summary of responses to item three.

TABLE 4.12

Responses to questionnaire item #3, "Overall, the new MFP is a positive educational initiative."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	61% (20)	63% (10)	59% (10)
Neutral	30% (10)	37% (6)	24% (4)
Disagree	9% (3)	0% (0)	17% (3)

Responses	Rural	Urban
Agree	70% (14)	37% (6)
Neutral	20% (4)	37% (6)
Disagree	10% (2)	6% (1)

Responses	Small	Average	Large
Agree	67% (8)	30% (3)	100% (5)
Neutral	33% (4)	30% (3)	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)	40% (4)	0% (0)

The fourth item was as follows: "Block funding for special education allows school systems to distribute funds for special education sources more effectively than was possible under the previous grant structure". The majority of all participants agreed with this statement. One hundred percent of the participants from large districts agreed with this statement. See Table 4.13 below.

TABLE 4.13

Responses to questionnaire item #4, "Block funding for special education allows systems to distribute funds ... more effectively ..."

Responses	Total
Agree	68% (25)
Neutral	22% (8)
Disagree	10% (4)

Item five states, "The flexibility which block funding has provided school systems will facilitate improvements in the services provided to special education students". A small majority of all participants agreed with this statement; however, participants from windfalled districts were more inclined to agree than were those from grandfathered districts. In addition, participants from small districts were more inclined to agree than were those from average-sized districts. See Table 4.14 below.

Item six was as follows: "Special education funds provided by Alberta Education to this school system for the 1984-85 school year were

TABLE 4.14

Responses to questionnaire item #5, "The flexibility which block funding ... will facilitate improvements ..."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	55% (21)	68% (13)	42% (8)
Neutral	21% (8)	11% (2)	32% (6)
Disagree	24% (9)	21% (4)	26% (5)

Responses	Rural	Urban
Agree	60% (13)	50% (8)
Neutral	18% (4)	25% (4)
Disagree	22% (5)	25% (4)

Responses	Small	Average	Large
Agree	62% (8)	39% (7)	86% (6)
Neutral	15% (2)	28% (5)	14% (1)
Disagree	23% (3)	33% (6)	0% (0)

sufficient to enable provision of adequate educational services to all special education students in the system." Of all the questionnaire participants, the majority disagreed with this statement, and participants from average-sized districts were more inclined to agree than were those from large and small districts. See Table 4.15 below.

TABLE 4.15

Responses to questionnaire item #6, "Special education funds provided ... for the 1984-85 school year were sufficient ..."

Responses	Total	Small	Average	Large
Agree	37% (14)	23% (3)	50% (9)	29% (2)
Neutral	3% (1)	0% (0)	6% (1)	0% (0)
Disagree	60% (23)	77% (10)	44% (8)	71% (5)

Item seven states: "Special education funds which will be provided by Alberta Education for the 1985-86 school year should be sufficient to enable provision of adequate services to all special education students in the system." On the whole, the numbers of participants agreeing and disagreeing with this item were similar. However, participants from rural districts were much more inclined to disagree than were those from urban districts. In addition, those from small districts were more inclined to disagree than were those from large or average-sized districts. See Table 4.16 below.

Question eight was subdivided into two items, as follows: "In comparison to services provided to special education students in 1983-84:

i) the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved.

ii) specifically, the level and quality of services to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar

TABLE 4.16

Responses to questionnaire item #7, "Special education funds ... for the 1985-86 school year should be sufficient ..."

Responses	Total	Rural	Urban
Agree	41% (15)	29% (6)	56% (9)
Neutral	11% (4)	5% (1)	19% (3)
Disagree	48% (18)	66% (14)	25% (4)

Responses	Small	Average	Large
Agree	25% (3)	50% (9)	43% (3)
Neutral	0% (0)	11% (2)	29% (2)
Disagree	75% (9)	39% (7)	28% (2)

handicaps) in 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved."

Of all the questionnaire participants, the majority agreed with both items. When considering the size of districts, participants from small districts were more inclined to disagree than were those from large or average districts. See Table 4.17 below.

Question nine also had two components, as follows: "In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school system in 1983-84:

i) it is expected that the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.

TABLE 4.17

Responses to questionnaire item #8i, "... the level and quality of services to special education students in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved."

Responses	Total	Small	Average	Large
Agree	76% (29)	62% (8)	83% (15)	86% (6)
Neutral	8% (3)	0% (0)	11% (2)	14% (1)
Disagree	16% (6)	38% (5)	6% (1)	0% (0)

Item #8ii, "... to former PUG recipients ..."

Responses	Total	Small	Average	Large
Agree	68% (26)	39% (5)	84% (15)	86% (6)
Neutral	13% (5)	15% (2)	16% (3)	0% (0)
Disagree	19% (7)	46% (6)	0% (0)	14% (1)

ii) specifically, it is expected that the level and quality of services provided to former PUG recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved."

The majority of of all participants agreed with statement 9i. Participants from grandfathered districts were a little less agreeable than those from windfalled districts.

The majority of all participants agreed with item 9ii as well. Participants from urban districts were somewhat more inclined to

disagree on this item than were those from rural districts. In addition, those from small districts were more inclined to disagree than were those from average and large districts. See Table 4.18 below.

TABLE 4.18

Responses to questionnaire item #9i, "... the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	61% (23)	68% (13)	53% (10)
Neutral	18% (7)	16% (3)	21% (4)
Disagree	21% (8)	16% (3)	26% (5)

Responses	Total	Rural	Urban
Agree	53% (20)	62% (13)	44% (7)
Neutral	14% (5)	10% (2)	19% (3)
Disagree	33% (12)	28% (6)	37% (6)

Responses	Small	Average	Large
Agree	39% (5)	64% (11)	57% (4)
Neutral	8% (1)	18% (3)	14% (1)
Disagree	55% (7)	18% (3)	29% (2)

Item ten was as follows: "For the 1985-86 school year, this school system will be able to maintain the level and quality of services which are currently being provided to special education students without increasing substantially the locally contributed special education fund." Of all the participants, the majority disagreed. Participants from windfalled districts were more inclined to agree than were those from grandfathered districts, and participants from rural districts were more inclined to disagree than were those from urban districts. See Table 4.19 below.

TABLE 4.19

Responses to questionnaire item #10, "For the 1985-86 school year ... maintain the level and quality of services ... without increasing substantially the locally contributed ... fund."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	24% (9)	31% (6)	17% (3)
Neutral	19% (7)	21% (4)	17% (3)
Disagree	57% (21)	48% (9)	66% (12)

Responses	Rural	Urban
Agree	23% (5)	28% (4)
Neutral	14% (3)	28% (4)
Disagree	63% (14)	46% (7)

The final item was as follows: "Overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative." A small majority of all participants agreed with this statement. However, where the majority of participants from windfalled districts agreed, less than 50 percent of those from grandfathered districts agreed. With respect to district size, where all participants from large districts agreed, again, less than 50 percent of those from average and small districts agreed. See Table 4.20 below.

TABLE 4.20

Responses to questionnaire item #11, "Overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative."

Responses	Total	Windfalled	Grandfathered
Agree	52% (19)	61% (11)	42% (8)
Neutral	24% (9)	22% (4)	26% (5)
Disagree	24% (9)	17% (3)	32% (6)

Responses	Small	Average	Large
Agree	39% (5)	42% (7)	100% (7)
Neutral	23% (3)	35% (6)	0% (0)
Disagree	38% (5)	23% (4)	0% (0)

Summary of Interpretation

Interviews:

The results of the interviews suggest that overall the majority (60%) of administrators did not feel that changes had been made in the 1984-85 school year to services for special education students as a result of MFP and block funding. However, administrators from windfalled districts were much more likely to indicate that changes had taken place (56%) than were administrators from grandfathered districts (23%).

Of the administrators who felt changes had taken place, of those from windfalled districts, the most frequent responses indicated that administrators have seen an increase in parent involvement and an increase in staff inservicing in the special education area. Administrators from grandfathered districts were most likely to indicate that MFP had effected changes in service delivery and funding distribution methods or had prompted re-examination of their present practices.

With respect to perceived changes to services provided to former PUG recipients in 1984-85, a large majority (75%) of the administrators indicated that no changes had been made to services provided. The most frequent comment made indicated that they had maintained services to these students. Of the administrators who indicated changes had taken place, the most frequent response from administrators of windfalled districts suggested that there had been a decrease in aide time

provided to these children. Administrators from grandfathered districts tended to express their concern about the loss of PUG money for ECS students.

The majority of administrators (64%) also indicated that they expected no changes in 1985-86 to services provided to special education students as a result of MFP. Of those administrators who perceived there would be changes, the most frequent response was that MFP was directing the system toward further coordination of services through the development of policies, guidelines and procedures. Administrators from windfalled districts indicated that increases would occur in the areas of inservicing for staff and integration of special students, and in the numbers of students placed in special programs. Some indicated that new programs, such as counselling services, would be added. Administrators from grandfathered districts were more likely to indicate that they would be reviewing their special education programs and services as well as the funding allocations for these programs and services. They also tended to reply that there would be a loss of staff and less aide time available to special students, and that there would be cutbacks in the budget for special materials or administration time in the special needs area. Other responses from these administrators indicated that there would be an increase in staff inservicing, and that there would be a move toward a classroom consultative model for special education.

Although the majority (72%) of administrators replied that they did not expect services to former PUG recipients (or students with similar handicaps) to change in 1985-86 as a result of MFP, the most

frequent comment was:

> "services will be maintained in 85-86; however, there will be pressure to do less and less down the road as funds get tighter".

A number of administrators asked "What does a district do when a high-cost low-incidence student moves in?".

The most common model used for delivering special education services appears to be the Cascade Model. Administrators were most likely to indicate that they utilize the "least restrictive environment" approach, and integrate to the maximum extent possible. It is interesting to note that in terms of changes to be made to the current delivery systems in place, where administrators from windfalled districts tended to indicate that they would be adding programs and services, those from grandfathered districts indicated that there would be a loss of programs and staff cutbacks.

When asked their opinion of the decision to include the PUG in the block grant, the most frequent response suggested that generally administrators did not view this as a good idea. Administrators tended to suggest that these students would now receive a lesser quality of service as a result. They felt that the money should go with the student.

Administrators from both district-types, but especially from grandfathered districts, tended to indicate that the inclusion of the PUG in the block fund was a mistake because it was based on the incorrect assumption that students funded by this grant were evenly distributed across districts. Administrators from windfalled districts tended to indicate that block funding overall was a good idea as there

now would be less abuse of the system.

The majority (68%) of administrators felt that a block funding system with PUGs for severely and profoundly handicapped students would be the best approach to funding special education. However, where 87% of the administrators from windfalled districts chose this approach, only 48% of those from grandfathered districts so chose. The most frequent comment indicated that administrators felt that there should be earmarked funds for high-cost students. Administrators from grandfathered districts tended to indicate that if there was a return to PUGs, they would like to see less red tape and an allocation based on a simple report of conditions and need for special help.

Administrators from windfalled districts tended to be more in favor of funding on a resident pupil basis than were those from grandfathered districts. A large number of administrators, however, were uncertain about what would be the best basis upon which to fund and felt that they were not well enough informed on the resident-pupil issue to comment. A number of administrators commented that the "resident-pupil issue" needs to be resolved.

The most positive effects of MFP, as perceived by administrators from windfalled districts are the increase in local autonomy and accountability, the focus on decentralization, the increase in flexibility at the local level, and the increase in freedom to meet student needs. Administrators from grandfathered districts viewed the most positive effect as improvement in planning, the recognition through MFP that the local group is best able to meet the needs of handicapped students, and the need for districts to place priorities on

their special education programs.

The most positive effect of block funding, as perceived by administrators, appears to be that districts now have the freedom to allocate dollars where they wish.

Other positive effects, perceived by administrators of windfalled districts, were: increased flexibility to be innovative and creative; recognition of the gifted; increased public awareness; and the ability to respond to students' needs quicker. Administrators from grandfathered districts suggested that an increase in awareness of the financial implications of special education at the local and provincial levels and the need to re-examine how to best provide special services were other positive effects.

The most frequent concern expressed by administrators of windfalled districts was that there is not enough money for services, therefore programs will have to be cut. Another common response was that parents are now demanding more than they can offer. Administrators from grandfathered districts seemed to be most concerned about the detrimental effect MFP and block funding may have on the educational services to special students.

Questionnaire

The majority of questionnaire respondents felt that fulfillment of the goals of MFP would facilitate improvement in the quality of education provided to special education students, although some interesting trends and patterns can be found.

Administrators from windfalled districts were more likely than those from grandfathered districts to agree that increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate would facilitate improvement in the quality of education to special education students. However, on the whole administrators did not tend to agree on this item.

A second objective which administrators seemed less than confident in was "enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results."

Administrators from urban districts were more likely than those from rural districts to agree that increased efficiency and effectiveness in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education would facilitate improvement .... In addition, administrators from large and average-sized districts were more likely to agree to this than were those from small districts.

Finally, administrators from large and average-sized districts were more likely than those from small districts to agree that the following three objectives would facilitate improvement...:

* Improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.

* Increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.

* Enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.

Administrators were less likely to agree that progress had been

made in 1984-85 toward the fulfillment of the goals of MFP. However, the majority of administrators did agree that progress had been made toward the fulfillment of the following three goals:

* Increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.

* Increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.

* Increases in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.

It is interesting to note that administrators from windfalled districts were more likely to agree to the second goal listed above than were those from grandfathered districts. The opposite trend was noticed for the third, with those from grandfathered districts more likely to agree than those from windfalled districts. In addition, administrators from large and average districts were more likely to agree on the third goal above than were those from small districts.

A more even distribution of choices from the three categories (agree, neutral, disagree) occurred for the remaining goals. However, administrators from urban districts were much more likely to agree than those from rural districts that progress had been made toward fulfillment of the following goal:

* Enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.

Administrators from rural districts were more likely to disagree that progress had been made toward fulfillment of the following goals than were those from urban districts:

* Increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.

* Increased efficiency.

* Increased effectiveness in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.

In addition, administrators from large districts were more likely to agree on the second and third goals listed above, than were those from small and average sized districts; and administrators from small districts were more likely to choose the neutral category than were those from average and large districts.

The majority of administrators agreed that the MFP is a positive educational initiative overall. However, administrators from rural, large and small districts were much more likely to agree to this statement than were those from urban, and average-sized districts.

The majority of administrators agreed that block funding allows school systems to distribute funds for special education more effectively than was possible under the previous grant structure. A majority also agreed that the flexibility provided will facilitate improvements in services to special students. However, administrators from windfalled, rural, large and average-sized districts were much more likely to agree to this statement than those from grandfathered, urban, or small districts.

When asked if special education funds provided for 1984-85, as well as for 1985-86, would be sufficient to enable provision of adequate services to special education students in the system, the majority of administrators disagreed regarding the 1984-85 school year.

Responses regarding 1985-86 were more evenly distributed across the three categories (agree, neutral, disagree) although the highest percentage (48%) responded "disagree". Regarding the 1985-86 school year, the majority of administrators from rural districts disagreed that funds would be sufficient, as did a large majority of those from small districts.

The majority of administrators agreed that "In comparison to services provided to special education students in 1983-84, the level and quality of services provided to i) special education students and ii) PUG students in particular, in the 1984-85 school year, have been either maintained or improved." It was noted, however, that administrators from small districts were more inclined to disagree with the above statement than were those from large or average-sized districts.

The majority of administrators also agreed to the above statements as they applied to the 1985-86 school year, however they were more inclined to agree with part i than part ii. In addition, with regard to special education students generally (part i), administrators from windfalled districts were more likely to agree than were those from grandfathered districts. Regarding PUG students (part ii), administrators from small districts were more likely to disagree that the level and quality of services would be maintained or improved in 1985-86, than were those from large or average-sized districts.

The majority of all administrators disagreed that in the 1985-86 school year, their school system would be able to maintain the level and quality of services currently being provided to special education

students without increasing substantially the locally contributed fund. However, the majority of administrators from windfalled districts agreed with the above statement. In addition, administrators from rural districts were more likely to disagree than were those from urban districts.

Although the majority of all administrators agreed that "overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative," administrators from grandfathered, small or average-sized districts were more inclined to disagree than were those from windfalled or large districts.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

The present study was designed and conducted to answer the following research questions:

How do superintendents, special education administrators, and principals perceive:

1. The goals, structure, and workability of the Management and Finance Plan (MFP) with respect to its effects on future directions for special education service delivery.

2. The goals, structure, and workability of block funding with respect to its effects on future directions for special education service delivery, with a specific emphasis on services provided to former Program Unit Grant (PUG) recipients.

Through interviews and telephone conversations with administrators, and a questionnaire, data were collected which focus on the administrators' perceptions of MFP and block funding. In particular, participants were asked to describe changes in the delivery of services to special education students which may have been or would be initiated as a result of MFP.

One of the central concerns related to the implementation of block funding, as expressed by educators, parents, and the public, was the loss of program unit grants for high-cost, severely or multiply

handicapped students. For this reason, the researcher studied the perceived effects of MFP on services provided to special education students and to this group of students in particular.

A second issue of focus in this study involved the differences in perceptions of administrators from grandfathered and windfalled districts. When the block fund was first implemented, adjustments to the formula were necessary to ensure that districts which were providing a high level of special education services would not receive less funding than they previously had. These districts were grandfathered. On the other end of the scale, were those districts which were accessing a minimal level of funding for special education and therefore a windfall of funds were received under the block fund formula. The researcher analyzed the data collected for differences in perceptions of administrators from these two district-types as it was believed that the implementation of the block fund would impact these two district-types in different ways.

On the basis of the data collected, it is apparent that MFP and the implementation of a block fund for special education, has had an impact on special education service delivery in the school districts involved in the study. As these districts were selected to represent those in Zones II and III in Alberta, the results and therefore the interpretations can be generalized and considered to apply to all districts in these two zones, and perhaps to all districts in Alberta, although the latter generalization is much more tentative than the former.

Administrators at the school system level who were interviewed

have expressed some concerns about MFP and block funding with respect to special education service delivery. Foremost amongst their concerns was the contention that, although the immediate effects have not been negative, and only small changes in actual service delivery took place during the first year of implementation, changes would take place in the next one or two years and not all these changes will be positive. Many administrators expressed the concern that as funds become more limited, and parental expectations continue to grow, it is going to become increasingly difficult to maintain the level and quality of services that have been developed and maintained over the past years. Several administrators, especially those from grandfathered districts, were concerned that there would be serious detrimental effects on services to special education students. Administrators in windfalled districts, in particular, expressed the concern that parents would begin to demand more than they could offer. These districts received an excess amount of money as a result of block funding, and therefore many added new programs and services. Administrators of these districts were concerned that in the future there would not be enough money to continue to fund these programs, and cutbacks may become necessary.

Administrators interviewed also expressed their positive attitudes relative to MFP and block funding. Foremost amongst these, expressed by administrators from windfalled districts primarily, was an appreciation for the increase in local autonomy, accountability and flexibility, and the focus on decentralization. Administrators from grandfathered districts seemed to appreciate most the increased

emphasis on improved planning and the need to establish priorities.

Administrators interviewed were generally in favor of the enhanced emphasis placed on the development of policies, guidelines and procedures, and they viewed this as a positive initiative.

With respect to changes which had occurred or were expected to be implemented, administrators from windfalled districts were more likely to discuss changes than were those from grandfathered districts. In windfalled districts the most frequent changes were reported to be an increase in parental involvement and/or staff inservicing. Administrators from these districts were most likely to indicate that new programs and services were being or had been developed and implemented. The increased money received by windfalled districts appears to have prompted development of programs where previously none existed, and thus the provision of services was enhanced. With the implementation of innovative programs and services, it is reasonable that staffs would require some level of inservicing. In addition, new programs and services may increase the need for parental support and involvement, especially in the case of new programs for the severely and profoundly handicapped and in smaller or rural districts where specialized support may not be readily available.

Administrators from grandfathered school districts were most likely to talk about changes to their service delivery models and funding distribution methods. They expressed concern about losing programs and services and often reported that changes which had occurred involved loss of staff, aide time, and budget allocation for specialized materials.

If a grandfathered district had a comprehensive system of special programs and services in place prior to MFP and, therefore, was already expending a maximally adequate amount of dollars on special education, they need only to continue to maintain these services and receive a level of funding commensurate with the level of services provided. However, a grandfathered district may wish to implement new additional services and programs. Such implementation may occur, in part, as a result of increased parental expectations. An increase in the number of students who are staying within the district rather than going elsewhere for services because of increasing tuition fees may also explain the need for new or expansion of current programs and services. On the basis of administrators' comments, should such addition or expansion be necessary, it would seem that grandfathered districts may suffer from a shortage of funding and be required to either increase the local level of support or cutback on other programs and services.

In windfalled districts as well, it is difficult to determine to what extent their programs and services had been developed prior to MFP. In some districts, there appeared to be very little development, and in others the level of services provided could be considered adequate to meet the needs of students being served locally. Again, however, a number of factors, including parental expectations, increased tuition fees, and a tendency for more special-needs students to remain within the local school system, would influence the need for further program development.

With respect to former PUG recipients in particular, administrators generally claimed that their district would continue to

maintain the services provided to these students in the past. However, many indicated that a loss in aide time had or would be effected. Some administrators did not view this as a negative change however, and indicated that the flexibility of block funding allowed them to utilize aides for other students as well as the PUG students. It enabled them to put the money where they saw it being needed. A large percentage of administrators further indicated that although they were currently maintaining services to these students, they were concerned about the ability of the district to continue to provide in the future. Some administrators indicated that when a former PUG student from another district moved to their district, they were not providing an aide for the child, where previously that child had a full time aide.

One of the major concerns expressed by administrators was related to the inclusion of the PUG in the block grant. They felt that it was done on the incorrect assumption that high-cost students are evenly distributed amongst districts. Administrators from small districts in particular expressed concern over the loss of the PUG and indicated that their district would have serious financial difficulty should a high-cost student move into their district in the middle of a school year or if a number of these students moved to the area before the opening of the next school year. Several administrators indicated that they would like to see earmarked funds for high-cost students. Administrators from grandfathered districts especially seemed to favor an approach which would involve a block fund but with a PUG maintained for these high-cost students. Administrators from windfalled districts were more accepting of the new block fund than were those from

grandfathered districts.

Thomas (1973) identified the two major dilemmas regarding finance for special education as being adequacy and equity. It would seem that block funding, initially at least, served to provide an adequate level of finance to school districts. Grandfathering ensured that districts would not receive less than they had in the previous year, and many districts received a windfall allowing the addition of new programs and services or the expansion of existing services. The adequacy dilemma is one, however, that administrators expressed concern with primarily as it relates to the future. However, a majority of administrators also indicated that funds for both the 1984-85 and the 1985-86 school years were not adequate.

The question of equity is one which block funding, as perceived by administrators, has not taken into account. Many administrators felt that because of particular aspects of their district such as size, location, and tendency to attract higher numbers of special needs students, the block fund may not be sufficient to maintain services and programs adequately. Equity, it appears, is an issue that many administrators feel needs to be addressed.

The issue of categorical versus non-categorical funding as well as programming is another which warrants discussion here. Many administrators felt that MFP and block funding had led to an increase in integrating special needs students. Several suggested that they now have more flexibility regarding programming, and that the need to classify students for the sake of providing a special program has been greatly reduced. However, what needs to be more closely examined is

the type of integration which is being implemented. How are staff being prepared for these changes; and are the students benefitting or are they in fact being "dumped" back into the regular class with little follow-up as to the effectiveness of their programs. Overall, it would seem that MFP and block funding is directing school systems appropriately towards the further adoption of the "least restrictive environment" concept, normalization and mainstreaming. While this is a positive direction, adoption of such principles without adequate preparation has been found in the past to have negative results. MFP and block funding certainly appear to have had a major impact on school systems relative to the categorical versus non-categorical issue. It is important to note, however, that whereas administrators appreciate the flexibility and the trend towards non-categorization, they are hesitant to give up both the categorization as well as the categorically-based grants which have previously been allocated, especially for high-cost low-incident handicapped pupils. As Maher (1982) contended, categorical funding is the greatest single protection of educational programs for the handicapped.

The difficulties that small, rural districts have in providing an appropriate range of services and programs for special education was discussed earlier. MFP and block funding appear to have had some impact related to this issue as well. For example, some school districts are now more inclined to keep their special needs students within the district rather than send them out-of-district for programs which are expensive to the district because of higher tuition costs. Therefore, administrators are looking at alternate ways of providing

local programs for these students. However, as some administrators stated, it is questionable as to whether this is beneficial to these students as, in some cases, the superior program is inevitably the out-of-district program. In small, rural areas in particular, administrators are faced with the difficulty of providing programs for small numbers of students. Some administrators feel concerned about this trend as, although they may not be equipped to provide the services and programs needed by a student or group of students, they may also be financially unable to send the student to an expensive out-of-district program.

Weatherman (1983) suggests that small, rural systems must first conduct a needs assessment which would consider the capabilities of the current structures and programs to deliver a comprehensive system of services, the extent of support available, and the gaps which exist. According to Helge (1983), serving low-incidence handicapped children in particular is a major concern to administrators in rural districts. These districts need to consider alternate methods of service delivery because of high transportation and tuition costs. Cooperative arrangements, itinerant teachers and consultants, and non-categorical special classes are some alternate means of providing service. Weatherman has also indicated that a variety of inservice training packages and consultative assistance have been found to be valuable in upgrading teacher skills in remote areas. In Zones II and III and possibly throughout Alberta, it appears that the situation is such that school districts are becoming less inclined to send their high-cost handicapped students out-of-district. Therefore, alternate methods of

service delivery will have to be carefully considered for these students.

In summary, MFP and block funding appears to have had a mixed effect on the provision of educational services and programs to special needs students, as perceived by school system and school administrators. The administrators interviewed have expressed concerns as well as positive features of the new government program. Returning to the original research questions, on the basis of the data collected, the following summary statements can be presented at this point. With respect to the goals of MFP, the administrators interviewed generally believe that these goals are having a positive effect on future directions for special education service delivery. However, in terms of the progress made toward fulfilling these goals, they have expressed some concerns and seem to feel that Alberta Education and school systems need to work cooperatively toward sorting out and remediating areas of difficulty and further developing others.

With regard to the structure and workability of MFP, although administrators generally favour the goals, they have expressed some concerns related to the structure and processes involved. For example, although the implementation of policies, guidelines and procedures was generally perceived to be a positive initiative, many administrators expressed concerns with the process.

Block funding is viewed as a positive educational initiative by a small majority of the administrators. With respect to its goals, it appears to be favoured positively. The structure and workability of

this funding method seems to be considered adequate and administrators appear to especially favor the flexibility and autonomy which the block fund allows. However, the block fund's workability as it relates to funding for severely or multiply handicapped students seems to be rather widely questioned. Many administrators would like to see funds earmarked for high-cost students, especially in the event that a high-cost student moves into a small school system after the budget for special education has been designated and/or utilized.

It is important to note here that as the sample utilized was a stratified sample of districts in Zones II and III in Alberta, generalization of the results to all districts in Alberta must be done with caution. In addition, as a stratified sample was involved, the researcher did not utilize statistical methods in data analysis. Therefore, results cannot be said to be statistically significant. Conclusions and recommendations made are done so tentatively, and serve best as a basis for further research.

The next logical step would seem likely to be further examination of concerns expressed by the administrators involved in this study. In addition, the changes which have taken place and those which are being implemented should be carefully monitored by both the school systems and the government in order to ensure that an adequate level of servicing and educational programming is being provided to all special needs students in all school districts in the province of Alberta.

Suggestions For Further Research

Some areas that appear to need further study include:

1. The effects on outlying and rural areas of decreasing low-incidence programs in major urban centers.

2. The feasibility of providing special education consultative services in small, isolated areas.

3. The effects of decreased aide time and increased integration on pupils' programs.

4. The level at which local tax bases must be used to augment the block fund for special education.

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APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Title:

The Impact of the Management and Finance Plan's Special Education Block Funding on the Provision of Student Services to Former Program Unit Grant Recipients.

Objectives:

To determine the extent of change in services provided to former Program Unit Grant (PUG) recipients in the 1984-85 school year over the 1983-84 school year, within the context of special education services provided by school systems.

To determine to what extent the existence of appropriate policies and/or procedures in the special education area, at the system level, relates to the perceived quality of the services provided to former PUG recipients.

Subjects:

Subjects will be a sample of school jurisdictions in Zones 2 and 3. They will be categorized according to size (small, average, large), status (urban, rural, sub-urban) and funding (grandfathered, windfalled). Jurisdictions will be randomly selected from the various categories to ensure appropriate representation to the maximum extent possible.

Procedures:

Interview

1. From each selected school jurisdiction, one former PUG recipient who is still receiving his/her education in that system will be randomly selected. Parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and where applicable, special education administrators will be interviewed for the purpose of determining their perceptions of the quality of the child's program as it was in 1983-84, and as it is for the present school year. Questionnaires will serve as a basis for these interviews.

2. Superintendents, principals and/or teachers will also be interviewed to gather quantitative information relating to the child's program in 1983-84 and in 1984-85 (e.g., pupil-teacher ratio, aide time, budget, etc.).

Procedures (Continued):

Interview

3. Superintendents, and where applicable, special education administrators will be further inteviewed to determine their perceptions on the following:

   * block funding through MFP,

   * changes in special education services in 1984-85 which may have resulted from block funding, and

   * expected changes in special education services for 1985-86 resulting from block funding.

Questionnaires

1. For the remaining PUG recipients in each jurisdiction, questionnaires will be distributed to the parents, and to teachers and principals involved with the child's program, for the purpose of determining their perceptions of the quality of the PUG child's program in 1983-84 and in 1984-85.

Document Analysis

1. Files and documents from both Alberta Education and the school jurisdictions will be analyzed to gather information on:

   * description of school jurisdictions,

   * special education funding provided to school jurisdictions, and

   * description of PUG recipients.

2. Policies on special services will be collected from jurisdictions and analyzed to determine the existence of appropriate policy statements.

   Where written policies are not available, superintendents will be further interviewed in order to determine the procedures which are followed in the provision of special services.

APPENDIX B

LETTER 2 TO SUPERINTENDENTS (RE: PHASE ONE)

14-Mar-85

Dear :

Alberta Education introduced the Management and Finance Plan (MFP) in January, 1984. One significant aspect of the MFP is block funding, on a resident pupil basis, for special education. As part of my M.Ed. Thesis, with the Department of Educational Psychology (University of Alberta), I am conducting a study which will examine the impact of the MFP on the provision of services to students who received program unit grants in 1983-84. Your jurisdiction is one of 17 in zones two and three tentatively selected to participate in the study.

Attached for your information is a brief description of the study. As you will note, I hope to spend considerable time on-site collecting data through personal interviews. In addition to interviews, data will be collected through questionnaires and through analysis of documents and records. Jurisdictions, and all participants in the study will remain anonymous.

I am currently working as an Administrative Intern with Alberta Education, under the supervision of Dr. Frank Crowther, Director of the Edmonton Regional Office of Education. Dr. Crowther, Dr. Mel Fenske, Assistant Deputy Minster of the Program Development Division, and Dr. Irving Hastings, Director of Planning Services approve of and support the study. The information collected will hopefully be helpful to Alberta Education in decision-making with respect to policy-making and funding for special education.

I would appreciate it if you would complete and return the enclosed form, which asks for your consent and willingness to participate in this study, in March, 1985. Should you indicate consent, a former PUG recipient will be selected from your jurisdiction. I will assume the responsibility of contacting and obtaining permission from the child's parents. Permission will be obtained before any records pertaining to that child are examined.

... 2

I will be contacting you by telephone, at the end of March or early in April, to arrange for an on-site visit in April or May. If you have any questions or concerns please call me at the Edmonton Regional Office of Education (427-2952).

Thank you. I look forward to meeting you and obtaining your help with the question that I know you believe to be important.

Sincerely,

Beth Kossowan

Adminstrative Intern

/kjo

cc: Dr. F. Crowther
Dr. M. Fenske
Dr. I. Hastings

APPENDIX C

LETTER 2 TO SUPERINTENDENTS (RE: PHASE ONE)

1985 04 15

Dear

SUBJECT: Research Study - The Impact of the Management and Finance Plan's Special Education Block Funding on the Provision of Student Services to Former Program Unit Grant Recipients

This letter is to inform you that the above noted study, which you had previously consented to participate in, has been revised. The results of a pilot study, conducted early in March, prompted an adjustment in the study's focus. Although I believe that the original questions remain educationally significant, they are somewhat premature, as the full impact of the Management and Finance Plan will likely not be evident for at least another year.

Attached for your information is an outline of the revised research proposal. The study will examine system and school administrators' perceptions of the Management and Finance Plan and block funding with respect to future directions in special education service delivery, and consequent changes in the level and quality of services provided to special education students, with a particular focus on students formerly served under program unit grants.

I would like to meet with you, as well as with the special education administrator (where applicable) and one principal in your system, to discuss a series of questions related to the revised objectives of my study; these discussions will serve as a data source for the study. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call me at the Edmonton Regional Office (427-2952).

Thank you. I will be contacting you, by telephone, to arrange an on-site visit soon. I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Beth Kossowan

Attachment

cc: Dr. F. Crowther
Dr. I. Hastings
Dr. M. Fenske

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS (RE: PHASE TWO)

1985 04 15

Dear

Alberta Education introduced the Management and Finance Plan (MFP) in January, 1984. One significant aspect of the MFP is block funding, on a resident pupil basis, for special education. As part of my M.Ed. Thesis, with the Department of Educational Psychology (University of Alberta), I am conducting a study which will examine system and school adminstrators' perceptions of the MFP and block funding. It will focus specifically on these perceptions as they relate to future directions in special education service delivery, and consequent changes in the level and quality of services provided to special education students, with a particular focus on students formerly served under program unit grants.

I am currently working as an Administrative Intern with Alberta Education, under the supervision of Dr. Frank Crowther, Director of the Edmonton Regional Office of Education. Dr. Crowther, Dr. Mel Fenske, Assistant Deputy Minster of the Program Development Division, and Dr. Irving Hastings, Director of Planning Services approve of and support the study. The information collected will hopefully be helpful to Alberta Education and into school systems in understanding better the benefits as well as the difficulties in implementing the Management and Finance Plan.

Attached for your information is a brief description of the study. Your system has been selected for involvement in phase two of the study, a telephone survey. I will be contacting you in the near future to obtain your consent to participate. If you wish to be involved, I will discuss with you or a designate, five or six questions related to the objectives of my study. The questions for discussion are attached for your perusal.

Thank you. I look forward to discussing this matter further with you.

Sincerely,

Beth Kossowan

Attachments

cc: Dr. F. Crowther
Dr. I. Hastings
Dr. M. Fenske

APPENDIX E

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH PROJECT - REVISION

SUGGESTED TITLE: Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of the Management and Finance Plan and Block Funding on the Provision of Special Education Services.

OBJECTIVES: To determine how Superintendents, Special Education Administrators and Principals perceive:

a) the goals, structure, and workability of the Management and Finance Plan with respect to its effects on future directions for special education delivery.

b) the goals, structure, and workability of block funding with respect to the effects on future directions for special education service delivery, with a specific emphasis on services provided to former PUG recipients.

PHASE ONE Telephone Survey

Subjects: Subjects will be all school systems in Zones II and III not selected for Phase Two of this study.

Procedures: A telephone survey will be conducted with Superintendents and/or Special Education Administrators to determine what changes have taken place in special education services provided in 1984-85 as compared to those provided in 1983-84, as a result of block funding, and to determine what changes in special education services they expect for 1985-86 as a result of block funding.

PHASE TWO Interviews

Subjects: Subjects will be a sample of school jurisdictions in Zones II and III. They will be categorized according to size (small, average, large), status (urban, rural, suburban), and funding (grandfathered, formula funded). Jurisdictions will be randomly selected from the various categories to ensure appropriate representation to the maximum extent possible.

Procedures: Interviews will be held with the Superintendent, Special Education Administrator and one principal in each selected jurisdiction. Questions will focus on the stated study objectives.

APPENDIX F

ZONES II AND III DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

Jurisdiction	Grand-fathered		Wind-Fallen		No Significant Change		Size			Status			Program Unit Grants	
	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	S	A	L	R	U	S	Number	%
Athabasca (County #12)					20,541	8.7		*		*			3	0.15
Barrhead (County #11)	41,582	13.8						*		*			9	0.39
Beaver (County #9)					10,301	4.5		*		*			3	0.16
Devon (District #4972)			21,478	22.3			*					*	1	0.11
Drayton Valley (RCSSD #111)			13,485	47.7			*			*			-	-
Edmonton (District #7)	1,295,445	13.5							*		*		197	0.31
Edmonton (RCSSD #7)					164,547	4.7			*		*		66	0.26
Edson (RCSSD #153)	21,205	44.1					*			*			3	0.93
Fort McMurray (District #2833)					3,557	.55		*		*			12	0.25

ZONES II AND III DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

Jurisdiction	Grand-fathered		Wind-Fallen		No Significant Change		Size			Status			Program Unit Grants	
	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	S	A	L	R	U	S	Number	%
Fort McMurray (RCSSD #32)			185,586	69.3				*		*			2	0.06
Fort Saskatchewan (RCSSD #104)	12,461	12.9					*					*	1	0.13
Glen Avon (PSSD #5)	7,333	15.7					*			*			-	-
Grande Cache (District #5258)	21,806	17.8					*			*			3	0.28
Hinton (RCSSD #155)			28,854	162.8			*			*			-	-
Jasper (District #3063)					3,499	6.5	*			*			1	0.23
Lac La Biche (Division #51)			28,317	11.5				*		*			2	0.09
Lac Ste. Anne (County #28)			35,764	12.2				*		*			6	0.23
Lakeland (District #5460)	34,201	10.5						*		*			5	0.17

ZONES II AND III DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

Jurisdiction	Grand-fathered		Wind-Fallen		No Significant Change		Size			Status			Program Unit Grants	
	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	S	A	L	R	U	S	Number	%
Lakeland (RCSSD #150)			61,835	39.5				*		*			2	0.1
Lamont (County #30)					18,040	8.2		*		*			1	0.06
Leduc (County #25)	121,528	21.1						*				*	16	0.25
Leduc (RCSSD #132)			13,289	20.4			*					*	-	-
Legal (District #1738)			25,582	91.8			*			*			-	-
Minburn (County #27)	126,450	56.0						*		*			9	0.52
Parkland (County #31)			426,244	45.3					*			*	10	0.10
Smoky Lake (County #13)	24,842	21.9					*			*			1	0.12
St. Albert (District #3)			136,641	45.3				*				*	1	0.03
St. Albert (PSSD #6)					59,938	8.5		*				*	13	0.26

ZONES II AND III DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

Jurisdiction	Grand-fathered		Wind-Fallen		No Significant Change		Size			Status			Program Unit Grants	
	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	S	A	L	R	U	S	Number	%
St. Paul (County #19)			30,623	14.4				*		*			2	0.12
St. Paul (District #2228)	97,012	119.8					*			*			4	0.48
Sherwood Park (RCSSD #105)					2,496	.65		*				*	1	0.04
Spruce Grove (RCSSD #28)			30,070	76.5			*					*	-	-
Stony Plain (RCSSD #151)			10,372	82.5			*					*	-	-
Strathcona (County #20)			169,534	11.5					*			*	6	0.05
Sturgeon (Division #24)					28,189	5.0		*				*	7	0.17
Swan Hills (District #5109)			35,249	116.1			*			*			-	-
Thibault (RCSSD #35)			24,160	17.5				*		*			2	0.17
Thorhild (County #7)	18,393	17.8					*			*			7	0.87

ZONES II AND III DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

Jurisdiction	Grand-fathered		Wind-Fallen		No Significant Change		Size			Status			Program Unit Grants	
	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	S	A	L	R	U	S	Number	%
Two Hills (County #21)			27,823	28.0			*			*			1	0.11
Vegreville (CSSD #16)			12,956	47.0			*			*			-	-
Vermilion (RCSSD #97)					201	0.85	*			*			-	-
Vermilion River (County #24)			82,915	32.5				*		*			9	0.41
Wainwright (Division #32)					2,694	1.4		*		*			4	0.26
Wainwright (RCSSD #31)			19,197	112.1			*			*			-	-
Westlock (Division #37)			61,580	23.4				*		*			4	0.18
Westlock (RCSSD #110)			7,455	27.2			*			*			-	-
Wetaskiwin (County #10)	35,940	11.2						*		*			9	0.41
Wetaskiwin (District #264)	478,603	232.3						*		*			46	2.32

ZONES II AND III DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

Jurisdiction	Grand-fathered		Wind-Fallen		No Significant Change		Size			Status			Program Unit Grants	
	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	INCREASE	%	S	A	L	R	U	S	Number	%
Wetaskiwin (CSSD #15)			14,362	53.3			*			*			-	-
Whitecourt (RCSSD #94)			26,882	52.8			*			*			1	0.13
Whitecourt (District #2736)			47,305	79.4			*			*			1	0.17
Yellowhead (Division #12)					39,834	6.7		*		*			4	0.08

APPENDIX G

QUESTIONNAIRE

Date _____

I. Name of Jurisdiction

_____

II. Name of School (where applicable)

_____

III. Name of Respondent

_____

A. Respondent's Position

1. Superintendent _____
2. Assistant Superintendent _____
3. Special Education Administrator _____
4. Counsellor/Psychologist _____
5. School Principal _____
6. Other _____ _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SUPERINTENDENTS, SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS AND PRINCIPALS

For each question, circle the response which best reflects your opinion:

SA - Strongly Agree
A - Agree
N - Neutral
D - Disagree
SD - Strongly Disagree

A. Management and Finance Plan

1. The Management and Finance Plan (M.F.P.) was developed to improve the quality of education provided to students in Alberta. Fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. will facilitate improvement in the quality of education provided to special education students:

	1	2	3	4	5
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	SA	A	N	D	SD
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	SA	A	N	D	SD
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	SA	A	N	D	SD
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	SA	A	N	D	SD
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	SA	A	N	D	SD

	1	2	3	4	5
g) i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education;	SA	A	N	D	SD
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education; and	SA	A	N	D	SD
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	SA	A	N	D	SD

2. 1984-85 has been a year of transition for the implementation of the M.F.P. Progress has been made in 1984-85 toward the fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. as they relate to the delivery of services to special education students:

a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	SA	A	N	D	SD
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	SA	A	N	D	SD
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	SA	A	N	D	SD
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	SA	A	N	D	SD
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	SA	A	N	D	SD

	1	2	3	4	5
g) i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education;	SA	A	N	D	SD
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education; and	SA	A	N	D	SD
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	SA	A	N	D	SD
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. Overall, the new Management and Finance Plan is a positive educational initiative.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Block Funding

	1	2	3	4	5
4. Block funding for special education allows school systems to distribute funds for special education services more effectively than was possible under the previous grant structure.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. The flexibility which block funding has provided school systems will facilitate improvements in the services provided to special education students.	SA	A	N	D	SD

	1	2	3	4	5
6. Special education funds provided by Alberta Education to this school system for the 1984-85 school year were sufficient to enable provision of adequate educational services to all special education students in the system.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. Special education funds which will be provided by Alberta Education for the 1985-86 school year should be sufficient to enable provision of adequate services to all special education students in the system.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school system in 1983-84:					
8.1 The level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8.2 Specifically, the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school system in 1983-84:					
9.1 It is expected that the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9.2 Specifically, it is expected that the level and quality of services provided to former P.U.G. recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	SA	A	N	D	SD

	1	2	3	4	5
10. For the 1985-86 school year, this school system will be able to maintain the level and quality of services which are currently being provided to special education students without increasing substantially the locally contributed special education fund.	SA	A	N	D	SD
11. Overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. a) In the 1984-85 school year, have services to special education students in this school system (school) changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding? If yes, why? Describe these changes.

Overall have these changes been beneficial to special education students? Explain.

b) Specifically, in the 1984-85 school year, have services to former PUG recipients in this school system (school) changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding? If yes, Describe the changes.

Overall, have these changes been beneficial to this particular group of students?

2. a) Do you expect services to special education students in this school system (school) to change in 1985-86, as a result of the MFP and block funding? Why or why not?

Describe the changes which you expect will or may occur.

Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to special education students? Explain.

b) Specifically, do you expect services to former PUG recipients (or children with comparable handicaps) in this school system (school) to change in 1985-86? Why or why not?

Describe the changes which you expect will or may occur.

Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to this particular group of special education students? Explain.

3. Briefly describe the special education service delivery model which this school system (school) currently implements. How has this model changed in 1984-85? What adjustments will be made to this model for 1985-86? In future years? To what extent can these changes be attributed to the MFP and block funding?

4. a) What is you opinion of the decision to include PUGs in the block fund for special education?

4. (Continued):

   b) In your opinion, how should funding for special education be distributed?
      i) block funding _____
      ii) block funding with program unit grants for the severely and profoundly handicapped _____
      iii) on a resource or service basis (system used prior to MFP) _____
      iv) other (specify) _____

   c) On what basis should this funding be provided?
      i) resident pupil _____
      ii) eligible pupil _____
      iii) other (specify) _____

      Comments:

5. What do you consider to be the most positive effect of the MFP on special education in Alberta? Of block funding?

6. In your opinion, what other positive effects has the MFP and block funding had on special education in Alberta?

7. What concerns do you have about the MFP and block funding as they relate to the delivery of special education services to students in Alberta?

Other comments:

APPENDIX I

TELEPHONE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Telephone Survey

Date of Call _____

Name of Jurisdiction _____

Urban ____ Rural ____ Suburban ____

Small ____ Average ____ Large ____

Grandfathered ____ Windfalled ____ No Significant Change ____

Respondent's Position _____

In answering the following questions, respondents should consider the level and quality of special education services offered in their school system in the 1983-84 school year.

1. In the 1984-85 school year, have services to special education students changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, why? Describe these changes.

Overall, have these changes been beneficial to special education students? Yes ___ No ___

Explain:

2. Specifically, in the 1984-85 school year have services to former PUG recipients changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, why? Describe the changes.

Overall, have these changes been beneficial to this particular group of students? Yes ___ No ___

Explain:

3. a) Do you expect services to special education students in your school systyem to change in 1985-86 as a result of MFP and block funding? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, why? Describe the changes you expect may or will occur.

b) Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to special education students? Yes ___ No ___

Explain:

4. a) Specifically, do you expect services to former PUG recipients or chidren with comparable handicaps to change in 1985-86 as a result of MFP and block funding? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, why? Describe the changes you expect will or may occur.

b) Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to this particular group of students? Yes ___ No ___

Explain:

APPENDIX J

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM RE: CHANGES IN SERVICES

Changes in special education services will be categorized as follows:

1. Administration of Special Education
2. Staff Deployment for Special Education Services
3. Programs Offered to Special Education Students
   - number
   - range
   - # of students served
4. Extent of Integration of Special Education Students
5. Frequency of Contact Special Education Students Have With Professionals (i.e., teachers, aide, counsellors, other)
6. Screening of Special Education Students
7. Assessment of Special Education Students
8. Special Services (e.g., speech therapy, physiotherapy)
9. Special Materials
10. Parent Involvement
11. Monitoring and Evaluation of Programs/Services
12. Transportation
13. Professional Development
14. Other

APPENDIX K

INTERVIEW DATA SUMMARY

Question 1a (i)

In the 1984-85 school year, have services to special education students in this school system (school) changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding? If yes, describe those changes.

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 5 No - 16	Yes - 13 No - 10
Changes:	
Administration:	
1. Increase in time of C.O. position in change of Special Education - 2	1. Increase in time of C.O. position in change of Special Education - 1
2. Change in service delivery system and/or fund distribution - 4	
3. Tendency to keep students at local level previously sent out - 1	3. Tendency to keep students at local level previously sent out - 2
	4. Staff allocation is more flexible - 1
	5. Appointed task force to look at area of gifted - 1
Staff Deployment:	
1. Lost special education positions - 1	1. Lost special education positions - 1

Changes (Continued):

Staff Deployment			
		2. Increased number of special education positions	-2
		3. Hired an assistant principal to look after special education	-1
Programs:			
1. Expanded programs for high-cost low incident students	- 1		
2. Changing the nature of programming; adding some, taking some away	- 1		
		3. Added a gifted program	- 2
Integration:			
1. Are increasing the amount of integration	- 1	1. Are increasing the mount of integration	- 6
Frequency of Contact With Professionals			
		1. Students now receive less time with aides	- 3
		2. More students are being served now, increase in class size	- 1
Screening and Assessment:			
		1. Less need for classifying students now	-1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Special Services:	
	1. Adding an O.T. program next year - 1
Materials:	
	1. Increase in funds spent on materials - 2
Parent Involvement:	
	1. Expect an increase in this area, especially through IEP process - 3
Monitoring/Evaluation:	
1. Further development locally - 2	1. Further development locally - 1
	2. Initiated an evaluation by Alberta Education for direction - 1
Professional Development:	
	1. Increased inservice for teachers in the area of giftedness and/or special education - 7
Other:	
1. Regional Ofice Consultants are no longer available -1	
	2. Access CAPE service a lot more - 1
COMMENTS:	
1. Less need for classification of students	
2. MFP has given us direction	

COMMENTS (Continued):

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
3. Need for prioritization	
4. No changes this year - 1	4. No changes this year - 1
5. MFP consistent with the philosophy of our system	
6. Concern with the trend toward provision of fewer special services	
	7. Alberta Education assumes handicapped children are distributed evenly across the province and block funding was put into place on this assumption
	8. The loss of PUG's is devasting, especially down the road
	9. Difficulty created because the press gave the public the idea that a lot of money was available for special education
	10. MFP allows us to respond to needs more quickly than when we had to apply for PUG's - 3

Question 1a (ii)

Overall, have these changes been beneficial to special education students?

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 1 No - 2 N/A - 18	Yes - 8 No - 3 N/A - 12
COMMENTS: 1. Changes are not beneficial for gifted students	
COMMENTS (Continued): 2. Changes are beneficial for gifted students - 2 3. Changes are beneficial because of increase in integration 4. Results have been neutral to date - 2 5. We can now plan ahead and respond to needs quicker	6. It is beneficial for the low-incidence high cost students, but for the minimally disabled, it's not - 1 7. It is not beneficial for some who no longer receive services from an outside agency which may be the better place for them - 1

Question 1b (i)

Specifically, in the 1984-85 school year, have services to former P.U.G. recipients in this school system (school) changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding? If yes, Describe the changes.

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 3 No - 18	Yes - 4 No - 15 Uncertain - 4
Changes:	
Integration:	
	1. Increase in integration of of PUG student - viewed as a positive step - 1
Frequency Contact:	
	1. Less aide time for PUG students - 5
Materials:	
	1. Less equipment available for PUG students - 1
Other:	
1. Less consulting service from Alberta Education available - 1	

COMMENTS:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. We've maintained service to PUG students - 4	1. We've maintained service to PUG students - 3

COMMENTS:

GRANDFATHERED		WINDFALLED	
2. Have created own system for distributing funds to high-cost students	- 1	2. Have created own system for distributing funds to high-cost students	- 1
3. PUG student came to the district and did not get an aide where he previously had one	- 1	3. PUG student came to the district and did not get an aide where he previously had one	- 1
4. Received contingency fund for a PUG student hence have maintained service	- 1		
5. Concerned about loss of PUG's from ECS students	- 4		
6. Services have gotten better	- 1		
7. Have had to increase local input in order to maintain services	- 1	7. Have had to increase local input in order to maintain services	- 1
		8. We are now attempting to provide for these students locally	- 2
		9. Special education budget was maintained, but had to cut back other areas	- 2

Question 1b (ii)

Overall, have these changes been beneficial to this particular group of students?

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 1 No - 2	Yes - 1 No - 1
COMMENTS:	
1. Is this an equitable way of distributing funds when high-cost low-incidence children are not randomly distributed among the districts? - 1	

Question 2a (i)

Do you expect services to special education students in this school system (school) to change in 1985-86, as a result of the M.F.P. and block funding? Describe the changes which you expect will or may occur.

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 7 No - 14	Yes - 9 No - 14
Changes:	
Administration:	
1. Schools now must develop a proposal to receive funding for special education - 1	
2. No changes anticipated - 1	

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
3. Looking at reviewing services to special education students and the funding allocations - 3	
4. Will be looking at budget restraint - 1	
5. Further coordination of services resulted; policy guidelines, procedures more clearly established - 2	5. Further coordination of services resulted; policy guidelines, procedures more clearly established - 2
6. Funding for CAPE kinds will be less next year - 1	
7. Cutting back on administration time - 2	
8. Cut back on counselling time - 1	
9. Moving toward a classroom consultative model - 2	
	10. Will have to develop new formula to stay within our budget - 1
	11. Changes will have to be made to the current delivery model - 1
	12. Hired a full time counsellor for next year
	13. More funding will go toward tuition fees - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
	14. More administrative time will be available to teachers - 1
	15. Present L.D. coordinator will become more of a consultant - 1
Staff Deployment:	
1. Less aide time will be available to special education students - 3	
2. Will be losing some teaching time/positions - 5	
3. We may lose some non-resident students and hence some staff - 1	
4. Changes in staffing for special education are taking place as are a result of our evalutation - 1	
	5. We will be adding at least one aide - 1
	6. Special education teachers will be in part deployed into regular programs - 2
Staff Deployment:	
	7. Adding full-time counselling position(s) - 2

GRANDFATHERED		WINDFALLED	
Programs:			
1. Increase in program time (i.e. P.R.)	- 1	1. Increase in program time (i.e. P.R.)	- 1
2. Will provide program for a child we previously sent out of district (i.e., deaf child)	- 1		
3. We are introducing new programs	- 2		
4. We will no longer fund programs for students beyond 20 years of age	- 1		
5. Won't lose any programs but concerned about the quality of programs	- 1		
6. We are re-examining our gifted program	- 1		
7. Are losing a program	- 1	7. Are losing a program	- 2
8. Will lose students because of tuition increase	- 1	8. Will lose students because of tuition increase	- 1
		9. Number of students in the programs will increase	- 3
		10. Will be looking at implementing gifted program	- 1
		11. Fewer students will be placed in special programs	- 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Integration:	
1. Continued emphasis on integration - 1	
	2. Integration will be more of a problem as a result of MFP
	3. Expect a further increase in integration - 2
	4. We will be integrating as much as possible (advocate integration) - 2
Frequency of Contact:	
1. Although the demand for contact will be greater, the frequency will be about the same - 1	
2. There will be fewer people to service fewer students - 4	
	3. Increase in contact expected for special education students - 1
Screening & Assessment	
1. We'll be taking a closer look at the type of students we put in our programs and priorizing more than in the past - 1	1. We'll be taking a closer look at the type of students we put in our programs and priorizing more than in the past - 2
	2. There will be an increase in this area because of MFP - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Special Services	
1. Addition of staff to provide special services (i.e. O.T., speech) - 2	1. Addition of staff to provide special services (i.e. O.T., speech) - 2
Changes (Continued):	
Special Services	
2. Will utilized the health unit - 1	
	3. We are cutting back on the number of students sent for special services
	4. Present services will be increasing substantially - 1
Special Materials	
1. Cut back in budget for special materials - 3	
	2. We'll continue to provide materials - 2
Parent Involvement	
1. We've been working hard at increasing this - 1	
	2. Parents are becoming more involved, have higher expectations, and monitor districts closely - 2
Monitoring/Evaluation	
1. Increase in monitoring and evaluation because of MFP - 2	1. Increase in monitoring and evaluation because of MFP - 2

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Professional Development	
1. Increase in inservice - 3	1. Increase in inservice - 4
2. Cut backs in this area likely - 2	
COMMENTS:	
1. Maintaining service, but with increase in financial support at local level (S.B., tax payers) - 2	1. Maintaining service, but with increase in financial support at local level (S.B., tax payers) - 1
2. What does a district do when a high-cost low-incident pupil moves in, or if such a child leaves? - 3	2. What does a district do when a high-cost low-incident pupil moves in, or if such a child leaves? - 3
3. MFP gives additional flexibility - 1	3. MFP gives additional flexibility - 2
4. Should the grandfathering be cut, the quality of services would eventually be effected - 1	
5. Will continue to maintain services we are now providing - 2	5. Will continue to maintain services we are now providing - 1
6. Will be unable to maintain the same level and quality of services - 1	
7. Expect changes in future - 2	7. Expect changes in future - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
COMMENTS (Continued):	
8. Urban systems have the advantage of nearby support services, cheaper transportation costs, etc.	
9. We don't know what to expect for next year - 2	9. We don't know what to expect for next year - 2
10. Tuition agreements will be revised - sending jurisdiction will be asked to contribute more - 1	10. Tuition agreements will be revised - sending jurisdiction will be asked to contribute more - 2
11. May have to reduce special needs per student allocation - 1	
	12. Will have to establish priorities - 1
	13. Planning becomes a guessing game because of MFP
	14. There will be less mobility from system to system Systems will start providing services locally
	15. MFP has strengthened our good relationship with central office - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
	16. We have a good policy for exceptional students which we have been able to put into place because of MFP - 1 17. Expect to increase services - 2 18. Concerned about increase in tuition at Edmonton Academy - 1 19. A wrong assumption was made by Alberta Education in assuming that students are evenly distributed in the province - 1

Question 2a (ii)

Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to special education students? Explain.

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 3 No - 5 N/A - 13	Yes - 8 No - 2 N/A - 13
COMMENTS: 1. Have to identify priorities - 1 2. Because we've been grandfathered we cannot expand services - 1	

Responses (Continued)

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
3. We feel we've been penalized. We've taken a leadership position for rural districts and now have to wait for others to catch up - 1	
4. In the long run services may not be provided to special needs students who need it - 2	
5. Uniformity of services from district to district will develop - 1	
6. Are now encouraged to increase integration. We see this as positive - 1	6. Are now encouraged to increase integration. We see this as positive - 1
7. Hope to increase the service - 1	
	8. We can now respond quicker -2
	9. MFP will be beneficial to the gifted/talented - 2
	10. Now serving more students, but would they be better served in other agencies? - 1

Question 2b (i)

Specifically, do you expect services to former P.U.G. recipients (or children with comparable handicaps) in this school system (school) to change in 1985-86, as a result of MFP and block funding? Describe the changes which you expect will or may occur.

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 3 No - 17 Uncertain - 1	Yes - 3 No - 15 Uncertain - 5
Changes:	
Administration:	
	1. We will be making sure the child fits the criteria more closely - 1
2. We're looking into alternate funding services - 1	
3. Teachers must now develop the IEP and submit a budget for funding - 1	
	4. P.U.G. kids will receive less attention now in any school system - 1
Staff:	
1. Will not be able to increase staff as a result of MFP, as we feel we need to - 1	
2. We are going to lose aides - 2	
	3. We'll be getting more aides - 1

Programs:	
1. We will be looking at expansion to programming for behaviorally disordered students - 1	
Integration:	
	1. We will integrate P.U.G. students less - 1
	2. Integration for PUG students may increase - 1
Frequency of Contact:	
	1. Aide service has been maintained - 2
2. Students will have less aide time - 3	
	3. Frequency of contact will increase - 1
Screening/Assessment	
	1. There is no need to recommend students for services you can't provide, screening will probably suffer - 1
	2. Now access CAPE more for assessments - 1
Parent Involvement:	
	1. Increase in parent awareness - 1
COMMENTS:	
1. Expect to maintain or improve services - 8	1. Expect to maintain or improve services - 4

COMMENTS:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
2. Will be pressured to do less and less down the road as funds get tighter - 3	2. Will be pressured to do less and less down the road as funds get tighter - 3
3. Will have to priorize if grandfathering is lost - 1	4. P.U.G. students will get less attention - 1
	5. Have more flexibility to entertain changes in services - 1
	6. Will have problems if too many students move in at once

Question 2b (ii)

Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to this particular group of special education students?

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
Yes - 0 No - 4 N/A - 17	Yes - 2 No - 1 N/A - 20

Question 3a

Briefly describe the special education service delivery model which this school system (school) currently implements.

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Cascade Model/ L.R.E. - 3	1. Cascade Model/ L.R.E. - 3
2. Integrate as much as possible - 3	2. Integrate as much as possible - 4

GRANDFATHERED		WINDFALLED	
3. System based on individual student's needs	- 1		
4. Funding provided to schools on per-pupil basis	- 1		
5. Have district level programs and school level programs with primary responsibility being the local schools			
6. Use pull out R.R. model for mild-moderate; partial segregation for moderate-severe handicaps	- 7	6. Use pull out R.R. model for mild-moderate; partial segregation for moderate-severe handicaps	- 15
7. Use a non-graded program	- 1		
8. Use a system-based consultant	- 1		
9. Use resource model - where special teacher serves as consultant to the classroom teacher	- 1	9. Use resource model - where special teacher serves as consultant to the classroom teacher	- 1
		10. Program-based budget material	- 1
11. Use segregated classes for moderate-severe handicaps	- 2	11. Use segregated classes for moderate-severe handicaps	- 3
12. Integrate in all cases	- 1		

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
	13. We have learning centers in elementary for EMH and SLD which are integrative - 1
	14. Model based on Alberta Education model - 1

Question 3b

How has this model changed in 1984-85?

Responses

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Lost counselling services - 1	
2. Staff cutbacks - 1	2. Staff cutbacks - 1
3. Program for gifted/talented started - 1	
4. Attempt to switch some of op. ed. into French program - 1	
	5. Addition of counselling - 1
	6. Increased integration - 2
	7. IEP for every child in special education new - 1
	8. Have instituded a family school liason worker - 1
	9. Increased number of programs and categories - 1

Question 3c

What adjustments will be made to this model for 1985-86? In future years?

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Will be getting a counsellor	
2. Will have more double classes - trying to streamline classes - 1	
3. Further reductions will be made - 4	
4. Adding a program - 1	
5. Changes will be made to model - are reviewing it - 1	
6. Increase in integration - 1	6. Increase in integration - 2
	7. Move toward a resource/consultative model - 1

Question 4a

What is your opinion of the decision to include P.U.G.'s in the block fund for special education?

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Increased flexibility at the school district level - 4	1. Increased flexibility at the school district level - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
2. Funds spent on P.U.G. children may be insufficient because funding distribution is left to the district. These students will receive a reduced quality of service - 6	2. Funds spent on P.U.G. children may be insufficient because funding distribution is left to the district. These students will receive a reduced quality of service - 4
3. Not a good idea, the PUG should be maintained, or money should go where the student goes - 7	3. Not a good idea, the PUG should be maintained, or money should go where the student goes - 9
4. P.U.G. students are not evenly distributed. Some jurisdictions attract more than others. Block funding was based on the assumption that these children are evenly distributed - 9	4. P.U.G. students are not evenly distributed. Some jurisdictions attract more than others. Block funding was based on the assumption that these children are evenly distributed - 3
	5. The department should fund smaller districts more directly - 1
	6. The old system was better for smaller systems - 1
7. The P.U.G. should come under a social services grant as it is not an educational issue	
8. Before block funding we had the opportunity to deal with special circumstances - 2	

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
9. What do you do with the ECS kids who had PUG's who come into your system?	
10. The current system could promote school jurisdictions sending many students to other systems	
	11. It's a good way for the provincial government to save money - 3
	12. We should reduce block funding (dollars per pupil), and keep enough money to have a price tag on particular handicapping conditions - 2
	13. Going to block funding was a good move. There won't be as many abuses now - 4
	14. Special needs pupils should be the responsibility of the government - 1
	15. The time factor involved in the old system was too great - 2

Question 4b

In your opinion, how should funding for special education be distributed?

i) block funding _____
ii) block funding with program unit grants for the severely and profoundly handicapped _____
iii) on a resource or service basis (system used prior to M.F.P.) _____
iv) other (specify) _____

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
i) 3 ii) 10 iii) 4 iv) 2 uncertain: 2	i) 2 ii) 20 iii) iv) uncertain: 1
COMMENTS:	
1. There should be earmarked funds for some particular types of handicapped children - 6	1. There should be earmarked funds for some particular types of handicapped children - 9
2. The last system involved a great deal of bureaucracy - 3	
3. Smaller jurisdictions should be given special consideration - 2	
4. There is more flexibility with block funding - 1	4. There is more flexibility with block funding - 3
5. If they go back to PUG's they should cut the red tape and base it on a simple report of conditions and a need for special help - 2	

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
6. An approval procedure should be established to ensure the proper use of earmarked funds if PUG's are used - 1	
7. There needs to be a system where jurisdictions are not penalized for providing a high level of special education services - 2	
	8. If you budget properly with block funding you haven't any problems except with the severely handicapped — - 5
9. There should be a separate pool of funds for severe, profound, and multiply handicapped over which the government maintains control	

Question 4c

On what basis should this funding be provided?

i) resident pupil _____
ii) eligible pupil _____
iii) other (specify) _____

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
i) 3 ii) 11 iii) 4 uncertain: 3	i) 12 ii) 5 iii) uncertain: 6

COMMENTS

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Fund on an eligible pupil basis but increase the allotment - 2	
2. A resident pupil count is difficult to practice. The present method is cumbersome for claiming funds	
3. It should be on the basis of students served with non-resident fees charged to cover inequities	
4. Funding should be provided for students actually attending the district and receiving a service	
	5. The resident-pupil system works quite well - 4
	6. Whoever has the child should pick up the funding - 3
	7. I would suggest a voucher system which would cut across boundaries and be provided by the province for some students (i.e. multiply, dependent handicapped) - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
	8. Students should attend anywhere and pay regular tuition fees - 1
	9. The resident-pupil issue needs to be ironed out! - 1

Question 5a

What do you consider to be the most positive effect of the M.F.P. on special education in Alberta?

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. School districts were forced to place some priorities on their special education - 8	
2. It recognizes that the management group at the local level is best able to meet the needs of special education pupils - 8	
3. Paper work has been reduced - 2	
4. Planning has improved. We know what we can count on. - 5	
5. I can't find one! - 2	
6. Focus on results rather than process - 2	6. Focus on results rather than process - 1
7. Special education now has a higher profile - 1	

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
8. Recognition of the gifted program - 1	
9. It has clarified the role of the department, systems and boards - 1	9. It has clarified the role of the department, systems and boards - 8
10. It provides more flexibility at the local level - 2	
	11. Increase in local autonomy - 6
	12. More freedom to meet the needs of the students - 1
	13. Decentralization - 4
	14. More money is available now - 1
	15. We can access funds more easily and quickly - 2
	16. Increase in accountability at the local level - 4
	17. We now can share the responsibility a little more with parents
	18. MFP has laid out more ground rules, in terms of policies, etc. - 1
	19. It has decreased expenses - 1
	20. It makes for responsible management - 1

Question 5b

What do you consider to be the most positive effect of block funding on special education in Alberta?

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Districts now have the freedom to allocate dollars where they wish (Increased flexibility) - 5	1. Districts now have the freedom to allocate dollars where they wish (Increased flexibility) - 3
2. Block funding encourages districts to look at alternative service delivery models - 1	
3. It has made funds available to every district - 1	
4. It will save someone some money - 1	
	5. It allows the development of programs that fit into the context of a district's philosophy - 1
	6. Less paper work - you don't have to apply for it piecemeal

Question 6

In your opinion, what other positive effects has the M.F.P. and block funding had on special education in Alberta?

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED		WINDFALLED
1. Increased awareness of the financial implications of special education at both the local and provincial levels	- 3	
2. We haven't felt any	- 1	
3. Provides for imaginative planning	- 1	
4. It should lead to more effective funding	- 2	
5. Giving decisions to employees gains more responsible people	- 2	
6. It has made local jurisdictions look at how to best meet students' needs	- 5	
7. It has made districts think about long term planning, monitoring and evaluation of services at the local level	- 2	
8. It has made Alberta Education more responsive to local needs	- 1	
9. Perhaps there will be greater dialogue between the public and schools	- 1	

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
10. Less paper work! - 1	11. We've had the flexibility to be innovative and creative - 6 12. Now we can provide services quicker because there's less red tape - 2 13. We have to set up system based criteria - 1 14. It allows jurisdictions to deal with specific needs - 2 15. It will set a minimum standard for services in Alberta 16. It has recognized the gifted - 3 17. Increase in awareness on the part of the public - 2 18. More accountability - 5

Question 7

What concerns do you have about the M.F.P. and block funding as they relate to the delivery of special education services to students in Alberta?

Responses:

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
1. Methods which will be used by Alberta Education to evaluate - 1	

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
2. Paper work to prove accountability - 2	
3. Incidence of handicapping conditions may be disproportionate to the funding - 6	
4. We're concerned about attaching P.U.G.'s to block funding - 3	4. We're concerned about attaching P.U.G.'s to block funding - 4
5. Grandfathering - concept of equitable treatment	
6. Politics may infringe on the needs of students - 4	
7. There may be a serious detrimental effect on the educational services to special education kids - 11	
	8. There is not enough money for service - programs will have to be cut - 6
	9. Parents are demanding more than we can offer - 4
	10. MFP could be an invitation to offer the worst possible services - 3
	11. Taking away earmarked funds puts everything else in competition for those funds - 1

GRANDFATHERED	WINDFALLED
	12. Block funding doesn't make adequate provision for the possibility of small jurisdicitions being suddenly saddled with a number of high-cost students - 4
	13. Increased direction and guidance would have been helpful in terms of the gifted and talented - 1

Other Comments

GRANDFATHERED

- The Regional Office System of consultants was excellent for smaller areas. (S, V-Pr)
- We can't access CAPE/CORE unless we have multi-handicapped pupils. (S, V-Pr)
- Alberta Education ensures us that we can access services, but they don't practice what they preach. (S, V-Pr)
- We're glad the gifted and talented have been recognized but money that has been allocated is minimal to the point that it's a farce. (L, U-D)
- I'd like to see all jurisdictions move ahead rather than to see some fall back. (A, R-D)
- I hope Alberta Education is informed of this study. (A,R-D)(A,V-Pr)
- M.F.P. blockfunding may have provided a slap on the wrist for some jurisdictions to get going. (A, R-D)
- Special Education will not benefit. (A,R-Pr)(A,V-Pr)

- The objective was to dilute the money across the province. Overall, Special Education programs, province wide, are going to improve (A, R-Pr)

- Some districts will be in a holding pattern till others catch up. (A, R-Pr)

- It's hard to know what the impact will be for awhile. (S, R-Pr)(S, V-S)

- If the expectations are broadly enough communicated, it could have a good effect. (S, R-Pr)

- Some jurisdictions are really going to be hurt. (S, R-S)

- M.F.P. is a good direction, I hope it will continue for a number of years. I hope we can plan on developing our policies and programs. (S, R-S)(S,V-S)

- There should be an assurance by the province that they will provide us to educate properly with sufficient programs, equally. (A, V-Pr)

- This is a raw political move to redirect the heat from the province to the local level. (A, V-Pr)

- There's been no criteria set up for the cost of services. Alberta Education should set some guidelines. (A, V-D)

Other Comments

WINDFALLED

- MFP needs to be ironed out. (A, R-Pr)

- If the process remains flexible and adaptive, it will succeed. (L, V-S)

- It's difficult to say whether the MFP tied into block funding will free up Central Office people to provide more field assistance: if so that's positive. (L, V-S)

- Why is Alberta Education asking for a report at the end? Administrational work which will come at the end for annual reports, justification for grants etc. is just as horrendous. The work load has just shifted. (L, V-S)

- Sometimes we resist change simply because it's change. (L, V-S)

- It is ridiculous placing the responsibility at the local level when costs are excessive. (L, V-Pr)

- There will be the same feedback next year. (S, R-Pr)

- Why weren't people complaining before MFP? (A, R-S)

- This is a tend toward enrichment. (A, R-S)

- The money allocated for the gifted program adds a new dimension for a new requirement on the part of teachers in class. Follow up is required. (S, R-Pr)(S,R-S)(A,V-D)

- I'd like Alberta Education to give us more direction about an acceptable level of services or a standard level of education. (S, R-S)(A, V-D)

- What happens when parents of 'normal children' ask for more services? (S, R-S)

- More money doesn't necessarily mean better education. (S, R-S)

- A criteria for monitoring and evaluating needs to be established. (A, V-D)

- Alberta Education needs to re-evaluate the whole plan. (A, V-D)

- The whole idea of providing special services through the development of IEP's is positive, but costly. (S, V-S)

- Do we need to spend this much money on a MFP process? (S, V-S)

- There seems to be an opinion that Alberta Education has to keep the systems in line. The public has been led to believe that the educational system is of low quality. (S, V-D)

- Alberta Education seems to start up programs and then Peter out. (S, V-D)

APPENDIX L

TELEPHONE SURVEY SUMMARY

1. a) In the 1984-85 school year, have services to special education students changed as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding?

Yes - 6
No - 9

Changes:

New approaches to service delivery are being developed. - 5

Outside placements are being discouraged.

The area of gifted education is being exmained (i.e. conducting studies, hiring staff). - 2

IEP's are receiving increased emphsis. - 2

Programs have been maintained but it's been difficult.

Some students won't get special education.

Integration has increased. - 5

Pupil teacher ratio has decreased. - 2

1. b) Overall, have these changes been beneficial to special education students?

Yes - 4
No - 2
N/A - 9

2. a) Specifically, in the 1984-85 school year have services to former PUG recipients changes as a result of the implementation of MFP and block funding?

Yes - 5
No - 10
N/A - 0

Changes:

Services to PUG students has declined. - 3

Services are being maintained. - 4

There is a reluctance to send students out of system. - 1

~~Local funding~~ had to be increased. - 4

PUG students will be losing a program. - 1

Integration has increased. - 3

PUG students have lost aide time. - 3

Teaching positions have been lost. - 4

2. b) Overall, have these changes been beneficial to this particular group of students?

Yes - 0
No - 6
N/A - 9

3. a) Do you expect services to special education students in your school systyem to change in 1985-86 as a result of MFP and block funding?

Yes - 10
No - 5
N/A - 0

Changes:

Fewer students will be sent out-of-district. - 3

Services will be maintained. - 2

Services will be less; they will be tightened up. - 3

Gifted and talented programs ~~will~~ increase. - 1

Programs will be added. - 6

Integration will be increased. - 5

Staff will be reduced. - 2

Staff will be increased. - 4

Monitoring will be increased. - 4

3. b) Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to special education students?

Yes - 7
No - 2
N/A - 6

4. a) Specifically, do you expect services to former PUG recipients or chidren with comparable handicaps to change in 1985-86 as a result of MFP and block funding?

Yes - 7
No - 8
N/A - 0

These students will receive less time with teachers and aides. - 4

4. b) Overall, do you expect these changes to be beneficial to this particular group of students?

Yes - 3
No - 1
N/A - 11

Comments From Telephone Survey

N We would be concerned if we had a number of severely handicapped children. Would like to see the funds follow the children for severe cases especially. (S, R-D)

N MFP is time consuming and difficult for small school systems. (S, R-D)

N We would like to see more emphasis put on counselling in a mandatory way, with qualified counsellors. (A, R-D)

N,N Block funding is good. It works for most special education
W,G students, but we would like to see PUGs back for severely or multiply handicapped. (A,R-D) (L, U-D) (A, R-D) (A, R-D)

N ECS PUGs should be contined. (A, R-D)

N MFP has forced us to look at our programs and expenditures in this
G area and consider alternate methods. (A, R-D) (A, R-D) (L, U-D)
W

N,N Like the flexibility and accountability which MFP has provided.
N,G (A, R-D) (A, U-S) (A, R-S) (A, R-D)

N The inequities should be clarified over time. (A, R-D)

N We've set aside a contingency fund for aides for these students. (A, R-D)

N,N We would like to see a block grant structure with a unit grant
G structure for high-cost students. (A, R-D) (S, R-S) (A,R-D)

N A concern we have is with social services foster home placements.
G This situation is not covered in block funding. It is a non-resident situation in which we should be able to obtain tuition fees. (A, U-S) (A, R-D)

N I suggest that the government provide more money and provide it on an eligible pupil basis rather than on a resident pupil basis. (A, U-S)

G The provision for gifted education is inadequate. (A, R-D)

G,G Tuition fees are a concern. (A, R-D) (A, R-D) (A, R-S)
W

G There is added stress on parents who now have to fight for quality programs. (A, R-D)

G If grandfathering is lost the impact wil be severe. (A, R-D)

G The high-cost low-incidence problems are not evenly distributed.
N Block funding is not considering this. (A, R-S) (A, R-D) (A, R-D)
N

G Doing away with SETP's, etc. was a good thing as people took advantage of them. (A, R-D)

W I resent the idea that districts have to have policies, guidelines and procedures in place to receive funding. (A, R-S)

W A clearer definition of residency is needed. (A, R-D)

W One of the things MFP is supposed to do is establish equity, and I don't think it is doing this. (L, U-D)

W MFP is supposed to instill responsibility of school boards but this is difficult as school members may not have the same priorities. (A, R-D)

Note: Jurisdiction Classification

N = no significant change
W = windfalled
G = grandfathered

Respondent Classification

L = large
A = average
S = small

R = rural
U = urban

P = principal
S = superintendent
D = director of special services or special education administrator

APPENDIX M

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Grand Fathered		Wind Falled		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
1. The Management and Finance Plan (M.F.P.) was developed to improve the quality of education provided to students in Alberta. Fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. will facilitate improvement in the quality of education provided to special education students:							
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	A	12	63	9	48	21	55
	N	5	26	9	47	14	37
	D	2	11	1	5	3	8
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	A	11	58	13	68	24	64
	N	1	5	6	32	7	18
	D	7	37	0	0	7	18
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	A	10	53	11	58	21	55
	N	5	26	3	16	8	21
	D	4	21	5	26	9	24

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Grand Fathered		Wind Falled		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
1. Continued:							
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	A	15	80	17	90	32	84
	N	2	10	0	0	2	5
	D	2	10	2	10	4	11
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	A	3	16	9	48	12	32
	N	8	42	5	26	13	34
	D	8	42	5	26	13	34
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	A	12	64	16	84	28	74
	N	2	10	3	16	5	13
	D	5	26	0	0	5	13
g)							
i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.	A	10	53	8	42	18	48
	N	6	32	7	37	13	34
	D	3	15	4	21	7	18
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited funds for the provision of education; and	A	9	47	10	53	19	50
	N	6	32	7	37	13	34
	D	4	21	2	10	6	16
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	A	7	37	11	61	18	48
	N	6	32	2	11	8	22
	D	6	31	5	28	11	30
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	A	6	35	5	28	11	31
	N	6	35	10	56	16	46
	D	5	30	3	16	8	23

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Grand Fathered		Wind Falled		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
2. 1984-85 has been a year of transition for the implementation of the M.F.P. Progress has been made in 1984-85 toward the fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. as they relate to the delivery of services to special education students:							
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	A	6	32	6	33	12	32
	N	7	37	7	39	14	38
	D	6	31	5	28	11	30
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	A	10	53	13	72	23	62
	N	1	5	3	17	4	11
	D	8	42	2	11	10	27
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	A	13	68	11	58	24	63
	N	1	5	7	37	8	21
	D	5	26	1	5	6	16
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	A	16	84	16	84	32	84
	N	0	0	1	5	1	3
	D	3	16	2	11	5	13
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	A	4	21	4	21	8	21
	N	6	32	9	47	15	40
	D	9	47	6	32	15	39

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D - Disagree		Responses Grand Fathered		Wind Falled		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
2. Continued							
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	A	9	47	11	58	20	54
	N	5	26	7	37	12	31
	D	5	27	1	5	6	15
g) i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.	A	9	47	7	37	16	42
	N	6	32	9	47	15	40
	D	4	21	3	16	7	18
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited funds for the provision of education; and	A	9	47	7	37	16	42
	N	7	37	10	53	17	45
	D	3	16	2	10	5	13
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	A	9	48	7	37	16	42
	N	5	26	9	47	14	37
	D	5	26	3	16	8	21
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	A	8	42	5	26	13	34
	N	6	32	10	53	16	42
	D	5	26	4	21	9	24
3. Overall, the new Management and Finance Plan is a positive educational initiative.	A	10	59	10	63	20	61
	N	4	24	6	37	10	30
	D	3	17	0	0	3	9

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses: Grand Fathered #	Grand Fathered %	Wind Falled #	Wind Falled %	Total #	Total %
B. Block Funding							
4. Block funding for special education allows school systems to distribute funds for special education services more effectively than was possible under the previous grant structure.	A	12	63	13	72	25	68
	N	4	21	4	22	8	22
	D	3	16	1	6	4	10
5. The flexibility which block funding has provided school systems will facilitate improvements in the services provided to special education students.	A	8	42	13	68	21	55
	N	6	32	2	11	8	21
	D	5	26	4	21	9	24
6. Special education funds provided by Alberta Education to this school system for the 1984-85 school year were sufficient to enable provision of adequate educational services to all special education students in the system.	A	4	21	10	53	14	37
	N	0	0	1	5	1	3
	D	15	89	8	42	23	60
7. Special education funds which will be provided by Alberta Education for the 1985-86 school year should be sufficient to enable provision of adequate services to all special education students in the system.	A	6	34	9	47	15	41
	N	2	11	2	11	4	11
	D	10	55	8	42	18	48

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Grand Fathered		Wind Falled		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding							
8. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school system in 1983-84:							
8.1 The level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1984-85 school year have either been maintained or improved.	A	14	74	15	79	29	76
	N	3	16	0	0	3	8
	D	2	10	4	21	6	16
8.2 Specifically, the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved.	A	12	63	14	74	26	69
	N	2	11	3	16	5	13
	D	5	26	2	10	7	18
9. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school year in 1983-84:							
9.1 It is expected that the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	A	10	53	13	68	23	61
	N	4	21	3	16	7	18
	D	5	26	3	16	8	21

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Grand Fathered		Wind Falled		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding							
9.2 Specifically, it is expected that the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	A	10	52	10	56	20	54
	N	3	16	2	11	5	13
	D	6	32	6	33	12	33
10. For the 1985-86 school year, this school system will be able to maintain the level and quality of services which are currently being provided to special education students without increasing substantially the locally contributed special education fund.	A	3	17	6	31	9	24
	N	3	17	4	21	7	19
	D	12	66	9	48	21	57
11. Overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative.	A	8	42	11	61	19	52
	N	5	26	4	22	9	24
	D	6	32	3	17	9	24

RURAL-URBAN

Question		Responses					
A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Rural		Urban		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
1. The Management and Finance Plan (M.F.P.) was developed to improve the quality of education provided to students in Alberta. Fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. will facilitate improvement in the quality of education provided to special education students:							
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	A	11	50	10	63	21	54
	N	10	46	4	25	14	38
	D	1	4	2	12	3	8
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	A	13	59	11	68	24	64
	N	5	23	2	13	7	31
	D	4	18	3	19	7	5
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	A	12	53	9	56	21	55
	N	4	18	4	25	8	21
	D	6	27	3	19	9	24
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	A	18	72	14	88	32	84
	N	1	5	1	6	2	5
	D	3	13	1	6	4	11

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Rural		Urban		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
1. Continued:							
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	A	8	37	4	25	12	31
	N	3	27	7	44	13	34
	D	8	36	5	31	13	35
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	A	16	73	12	75	28	74
	N	2	9	3	19	5	13
	D	4	18	1	6	5	13
g)							
i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.	A	8	36	10	62	18	48
	N	9	41	4	25	13	34
	D	5	23	2	13	7	18
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited funds for the provision of education; and	A	9	40	10	63	19	50
	N	8	36	5	31	13	34
	D	5	24	1	6	6	16
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	A	9	43	9	56	18	48
	N	6	29	2	13	8	22
	D	6	28	5	31	11	30
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	A	7	32	4	31	11	32
	N	13	59	3	23	16	46
	D	2	9	6	46	8	22

Question		Responses					
A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Rural		Urban		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan							
2. 1984-85 has been a year of transition for the implementation of the M.F.P. Progress has been made in 1984-85 toward the fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. as they relate to the delivery of services to special education students:							
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	A	8	38	4	25	12	32
	N	6	29	8	50	14	38
	D	7	33	4	25	11	30
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	A	13	62	10	62	23	62
	N	2	10	2	13	4	11
	D	6	28	4	25	10	27
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	A	15	68	9	56	24	63
	N	4	18	4	25	8	21
	D	3	14	3	19	6	16
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	A	19	87	13	81	32	84
	N	0	0	1	6	1	3
	D	3	13	2	13	5	13
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	A	5	23	3	19	8	21
	N	9	41	6	38	15	39
	D	8	36	7	43	15	40

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Rural #	 %	 Urban #	 %	 Total #	 %
A. Management and Finance Plan							
2. f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	A	10	45	10	63	20	52
	N	7	32	5	31	12	32
	D	5	23	1	6	6	16
g) i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.	A	8	36	8	50	16	42
	N	9	41	6	37	15	40
	D	5	23	2	13	7	18
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited funds for the provision of education; and	A	8	36	8	50	16	42
	N	10	45	7	44	17	45
	D	4	19	1	6	5	13
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	A	9	41	7	44	16	42
	N	9	41	5	31	14	37
	D	4	18	4	25	8	21
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	A	16	73	13	81	29	76
	N	6	27	2	13	8	21
	D	0	0	1	6	1	3
3. Overall, the new Management and Finance Plan is a positive educational initiative.	A	14	70	6	37	20	60
	N	4	20	6	37	10	31
	D	2	10	1	6	3	9
B. Block Funding							
4. Block funding for special education allows school systems to distribute funds for special education services more effectively than was possible under the previous grant structure.	A	14	67	11	69	25	67
	N	4	19	4	25	8	22
	D	3	14	1	6	4	11

Question		Responses					
A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Rural		Urban		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding							
5. The flexibility which block funding has provided school systems will facilitate improvements in the services provided to special education students.	A	13	60	8	50	21	55
	N	4	18	4	25	8	21
	D	5	22	4	25	9	24
6. Special education funds provided by Alberta Education to this school system for the 1984-85 school year were sufficient to enable provision of adequate educational services to all special education students in the system.	A	7	32	7	44	14	37
	N	1	5	0	0	1	3
	D	14	63	9	56	23	60
7. Special education funds which will be provided by Alberta Education for the 1985-86 school year should be sufficient to enable provision of adequate services to all special education students in the system.	A	6	29	9	56	15	41
	N	1	5	3	19	4	11
	D	14	66	4	25	18	48
8. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school system in 1983-84:							
8.1 The level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1984-85 school year have either been maintained or improved.	A	16	73	13	82	29	76
	N	2	9	1	6	3	8
	D	4	48	2	12	6	16

Question		Responses					
A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Rural		Urban		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding							
8.2 Specifically, the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved.	A	14	63	11	73	25	68
	N	4	18	1	7	5	13
	D	4	19	3	20	7	19
9. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school year in 1983-84:							
9.1 It is expected that the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	A	14	63	9	56	23	60
	N	2	9	5	31	7	18
	D	6	28	2	13	8	22
9.2 Specifically, it is expected that the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	A	13	62	7	44	20	53
	N	2	10	3	19	5	14
	D	6	28	6	37	12	33

Question		Responses					
A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Rural		Urban		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding							
10. For the 1985-86 school year, this school system will be able to maintain the level and quality of services which are currently being provided to special education students without increasing substantially the locally contributed special education fund.	A	5	23	4	28	9	24
	N	3	14	4	28	7	19
	D	14	63	7	46	21	57
11. Overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative.	A	11	53	8	50	19	52
	N	5	24	4	25	9	24
	D	5	23	4	25	9	24

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses							
		Average		Large		Small		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan									
1. The Management and Finance Plan (M.F.P.) was developed to improve the quality of education provided to students in Alberta. Fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. will facilitate improvement in the quality of education provided to special education students:									
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	A	7	39	6	86	8	92	21	55
	N	9	50	1	14	4	8	14	37
	D	2	11	0	0	1	0	3	8
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	A	9	50	7	100	8	62	24	63
	N	3	16	0	0	4	30	7	18
	D	6	34	0	0	1	8	7	19
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	A	9	49	4	57	8	61	21	55
	N	5	28	1	14	2	15	8	21
	D	1	6	0	0	3	23	4	11
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	A	16	88	7	100	9	69	32	84
	N	1	6	0	0	1	8	2	5
	D	1	6	0	0	3	23	4	11
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	A	5	28	2	29	5	39	12	32
	N	5	28	4	57	4	31	13	34
	D	8	44	1	14	4	30	13	34

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses Average		Large		Small		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
A. Management and Finance Plan									
1. Continued:									
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.									
g)									
i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.	A	9	50	6	86	3	23	18	48
	N	5	28	1	14	7	54	13	37
	D	4	22	0	0	1	8	5	13
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited funds for the provision of education; and	A	9	50	6	86	3	23	18	48
	N	4	22	1	14	8	61	13	34
	D	5	28	0	0	1	8	6	16
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	A	7	41	5	72	6	47	18	49
	N	2	12	2	28	4	30	8	22
	D	8	47	0	0	3	23	11	29
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	A	3	17	2	40	6	46	11	32
	N	9	53	2	40	5	39	16	45
	D	5	30	1	20	2	15	8	23

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses: Average #	Average %	Large #	Large %	Small #	Small %	Total #	Total %
A. Management and Finance Plan									
2. 1984-85 has been a year of transition for the implementation of the M.F.P. Progress has been made in 1984-85 toward the fulfillment of the following goals of the M.F.P. as they relate to the delivery of services to special education students:									
a) improved information on the results of educational programming available to students, teachers, parents, school jurisdictions, and other educational agencies.	A	4	24	3	43	5	39	12	33
	N	8	47	3	43	3	23	14	37
	D	5	29	1	14	5	38	11	30
b) increased responsiveness by the educational system to the changing needs of students and parents.	A	8	47	7	100	8	62	23	62
	N	3	18	0	0	1	8	4	11
	D	6	35	0	0	4	30	10	27
c) increased direction to school systems through the establishment of provincial policies.	A	11	61	3	43	10	77	24	63
	N	3	17	3	43	2	15	8	21
	D	4	22	1	14	1	8	6	16
d) increase in local responsibility, autonomy, flexibility, and discretion over the use of provincial funds to meet local needs.	A	14	78	7	100	11	84	32	84
	N	0	0	0	0	1	8	1	3
	D	4	22	0	0	1	8	5	13
e) increased accountability by Alberta Education to the electorate.	A	4	22	2	28	2	15	8	21
	N	5	28	4	57	6	46	15	40
	D	9	50	1	15	5	39	15	39
f) increased accountability by school jurisdictions to the electorate.	A	9	50	4	57	7	54	20	53
	N	5	28	3	43	4	31	12	32
	D	4	22	0	0	2	15	6	15

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses: Average #	Average %	Large #	Large %	Small #	Small %	Total #	Total %
A. Management and Finance Plan									
2. g) i) increased efficiency in the use of limited public funds for the provision of education.	A	8	44	5	71	3	23	16	42
	N	6	33	1	14	8	62	15	40
	D	4	23	1	15	2	15	7	18
ii) increased effectiveness in the use of limited funds for the provision of education; and	A	8	44	5	71	3	23	16	43
	N	7	39	2	29	8	62	17	45
	D	3	17	0	0	2	15	5	12
iii) increased focus on providing benefits directly to students.	A	4	22	5	71	7	54	16	42
	N	8	44	2	29	4	31	14	37
	D	6	34	0	0	2	15	8	21
h) enhanced partnership among school organizations and Alberta Education in the planning and evaluation of educational results.	A	5	28	2	29	6	46	13	34
	N	7	39	5	71	4	31	16	42
	D	6	33	0	0	3	23	9	24
3. Overall, the new Management and Finance Plan is a positive educational initiative.	A	3	30	5	100	8	67	20	60
	N	3	30	0	0	4	33	10	30
	D	4	40	0	0	0	0	3	10
B. Block Funding									
4. Block funding for special education allows school systems to distribute funds for special education services more effectively than was possible under the previous grant structure.	A	10	59	7	100	8	62	25	68
	N	4	23	0	0	4	31	8	22
	D	3	18	0	0	1	8	4	10
5. The flexibility which block funding has provided school systems will facilitate improvements in the services provided to special education students.	A	7	39	6	86	8	62	21	55
	N	5	28	1	14	2	15	8	21
	D	6	33	0	0	3	23	9	24

Question A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Responses							
		Average		Large		Small		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding									
6. Special education funds provided by Alberta Education to this school system for the 1984-85 school year were sufficient to enable provision of adequate educational services to all special education students in the system.	A	9	50	2	29	3	23	14	37
	N	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	3
	D	8	44	5	71	10	77	23	60
7. Special education funds which will be provided by Alberta Education for the 1985-86 school year should be sufficient to enable provision of adequate services to all special education students in the system.	A	9	50	3	43	3	25	15	41
	N	2	11	2	29	0	0	4	11
	D	7	39	2	28	9	75	18	48
8. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school system in 1983-84:									
8.1 The level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1984-85 school year have either been maintained or improved.	A	15	83	6	86	8	62	29	76
	N	2	11	1	14	0	0	3	8
	D	1	6	0	0	5	38	6	16
8.2 Specifically, the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1984-85 school year have been either maintained or improved.	A	15	84	6	86	5	39	26	68
	N	3	16	0	0	2	15	5	13
	D	0	0	1	14	6	46	7	19

Question		Responses							
A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree		Average		Large		Small		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
B. Block Funding									
9. In comparison to services provided to special education students in this school year in 1983-84:									
9.1 It is expected that the level and quality of services provided to special education students in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	A	11	61	4	57	8	62	23	61
	N	4	22	2	29	1	8	7	18
	D	3	17	1	14	4	30	8	21
9.2 Specifically, it is expected that the level and quality of services provided to former Program Unit Grant recipients (or children with similar handicaps) in the 1985-86 school year will be either maintained or improved.	A	11	64	4	57	5	39	20	54
	N	3	18	1	14	1	8	5	13
	D	3	18	2	29	7	55	12	33
10. For the 1985-86 school year, this school system will be able to maintain the level and quality of services which are currently being provided to special education students without increasing substantially the locally contributed special education fund.	A	4	22	2	33	3	23	9	24
	N	5	28	1	17	1	8	7	19
	D	9	50	3	50	9	69	21	57
11. Overall, block funding for special education is a positive educational initiative.	A	7	42	7	100	5	39	19	52
	N	6	35	0	0	3	23	9	24
	D	4	23	0	0	5	38	9	24